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(45) **Date of Patent:** **Feb. 2, 2016**

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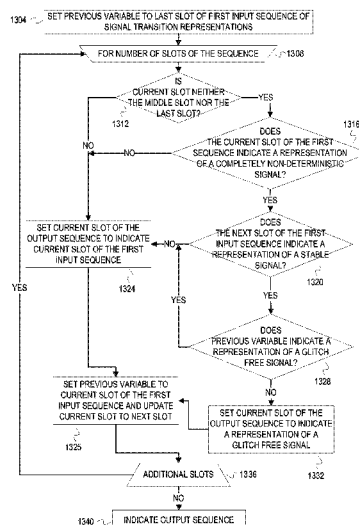
Related U.S. Application Data

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A design tool can implement phase algebra based design evaluation to efficiently evaluate a circuit design with a compact representation of numerous waveforms without simulating the individual waveforms. Instead of individual waveforms, the phase algebra based design evaluation employs compact representations of a group or set of waveforms. Phase algebra based evaluation constructs representations of a set of waveforms based on relationships among a devised set of functions that account for the various states of a signal over time, including transitions and glitches. A memorized-transition function, referred to herein as an M-function, indicates signal transitions over time.

20 Claims, 26 Drawing Sheets

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC G06F 9/45
USPC 716/103
See application file for complete search history.



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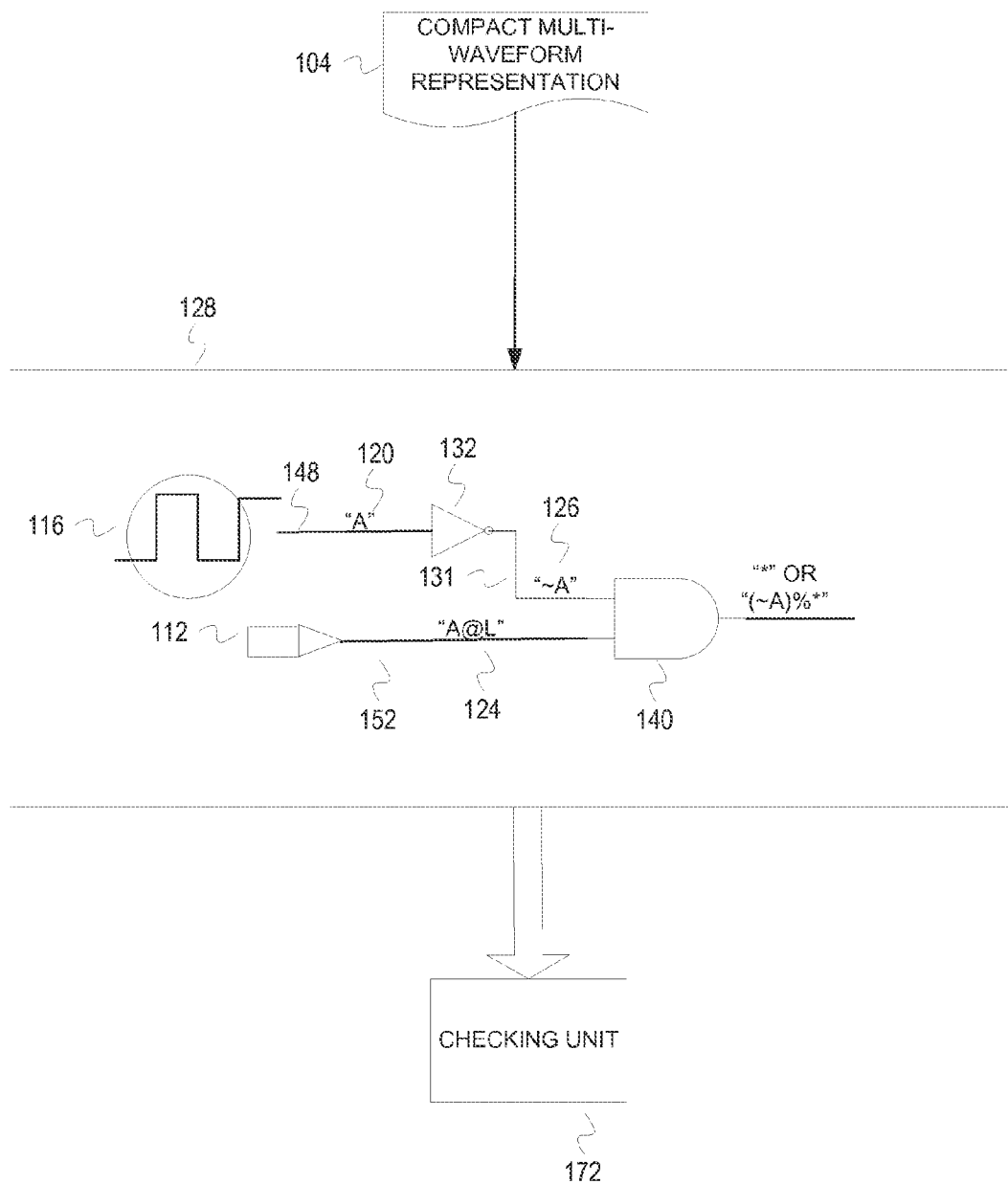


FIG. 1

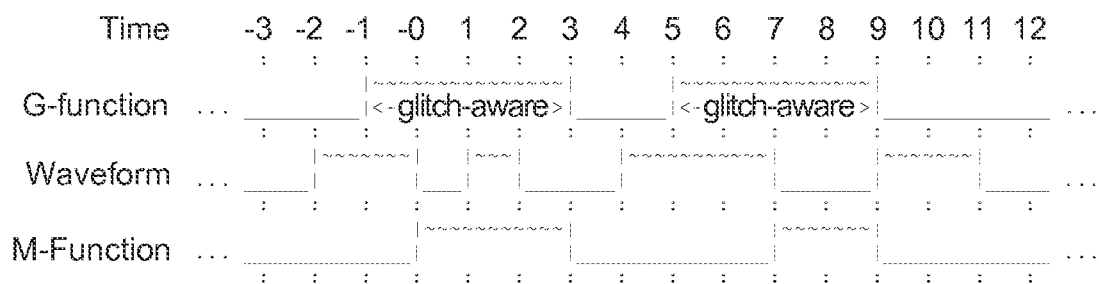


FIG. 2

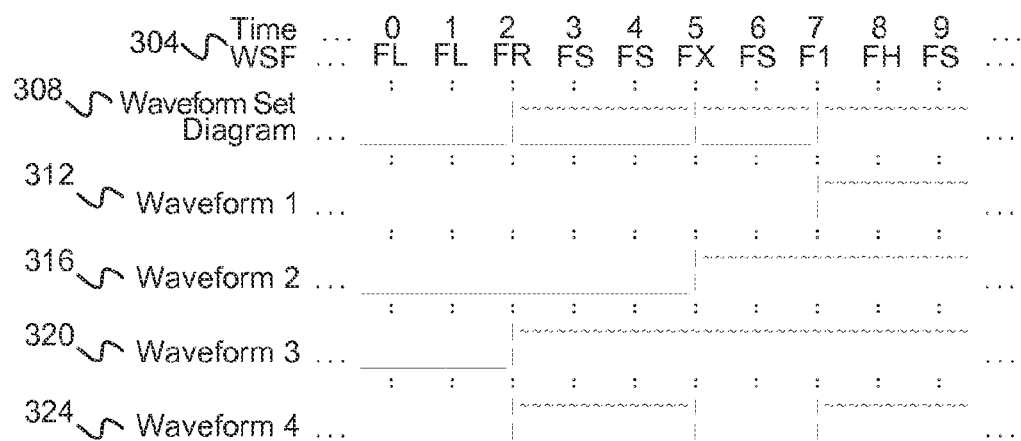


FIG. 3

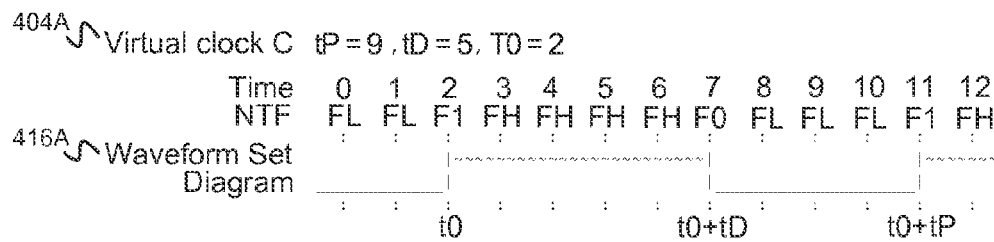


FIG. 4A

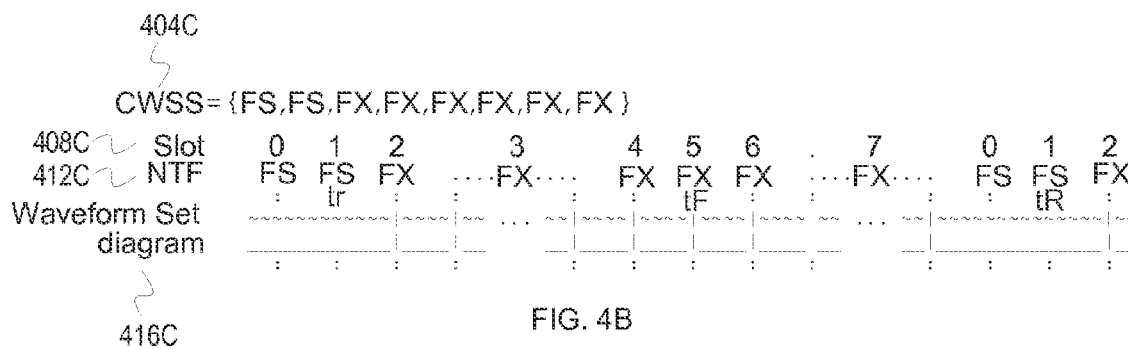


FIG. 4B

FIG. 4

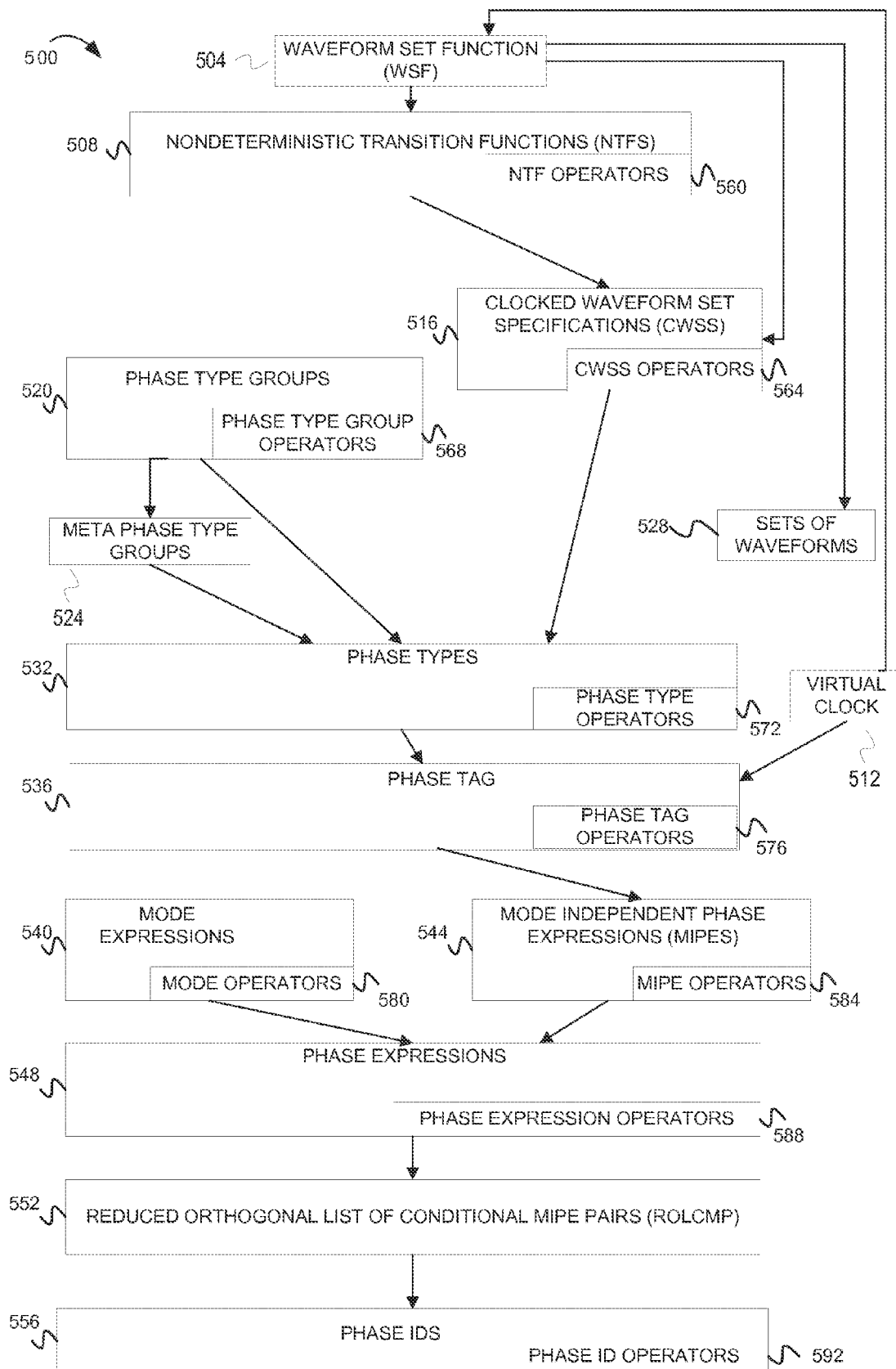


FIG. 5

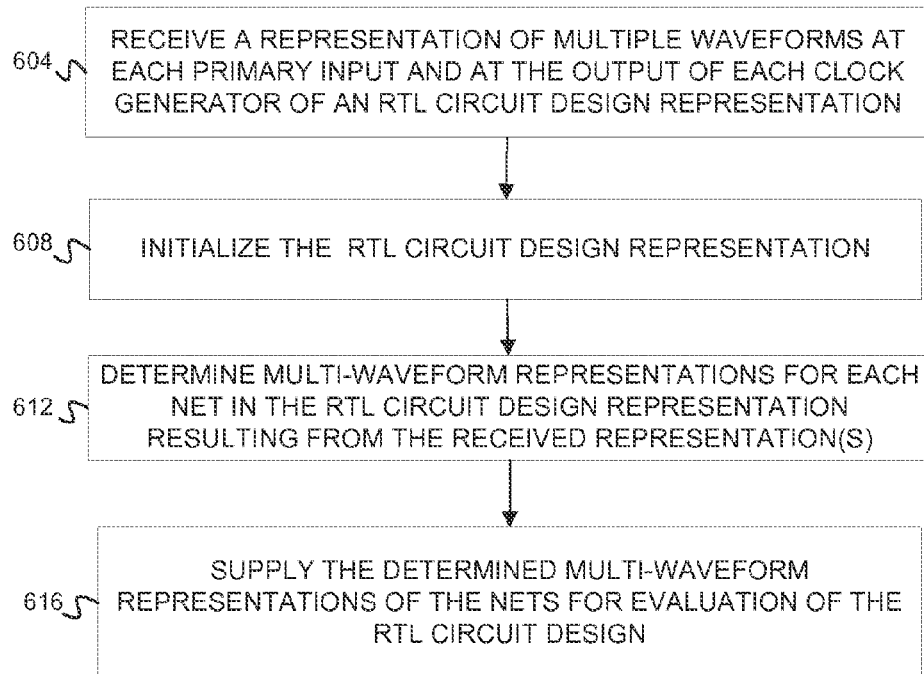


FIG. 6

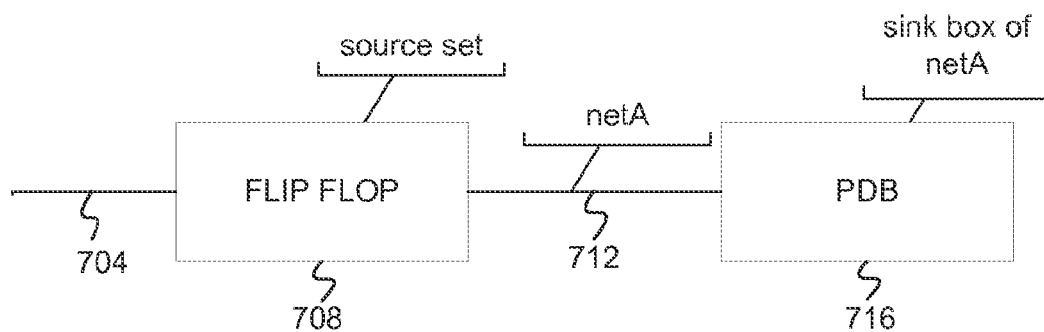


FIG. 7

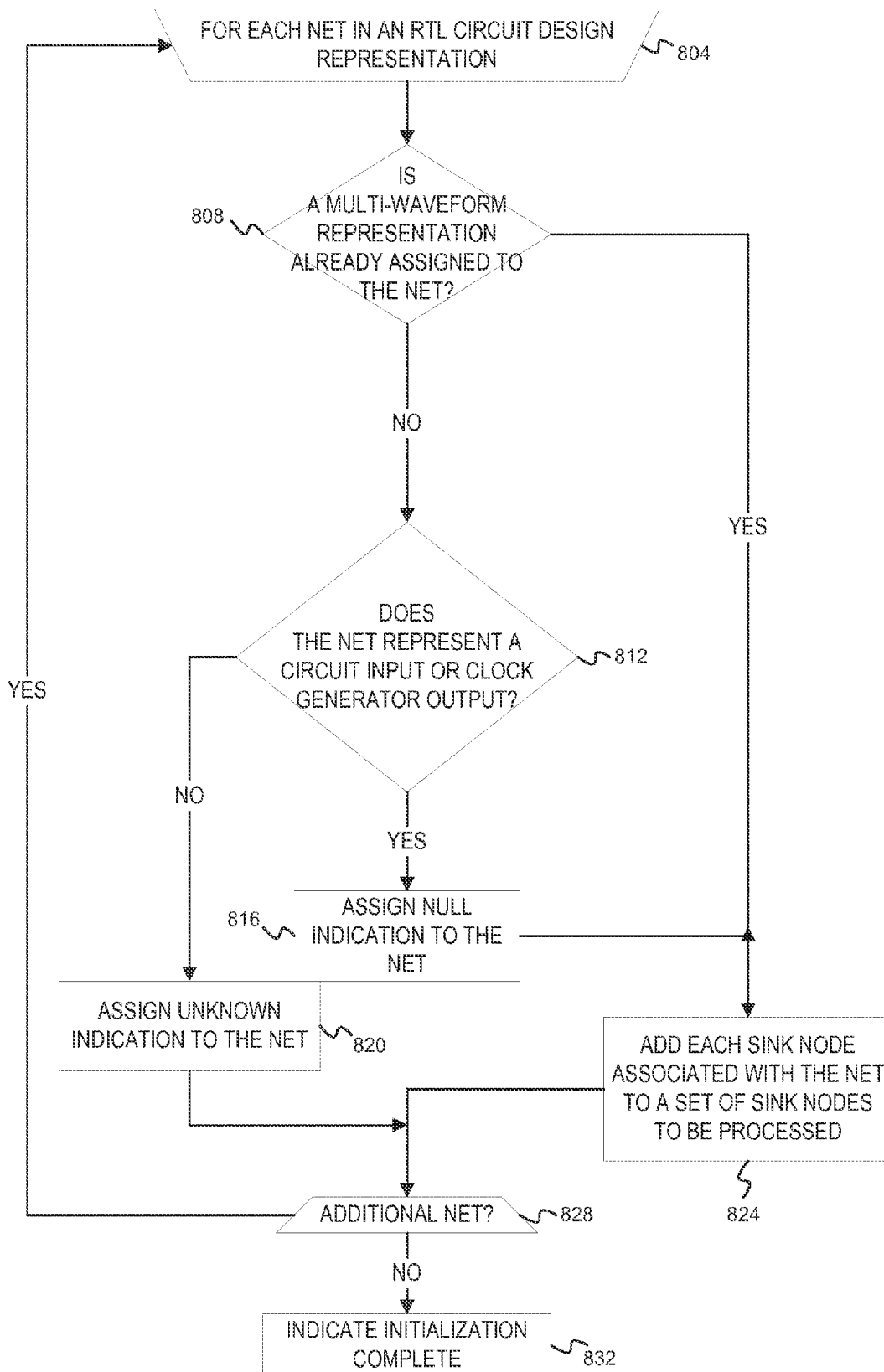


FIG. 8

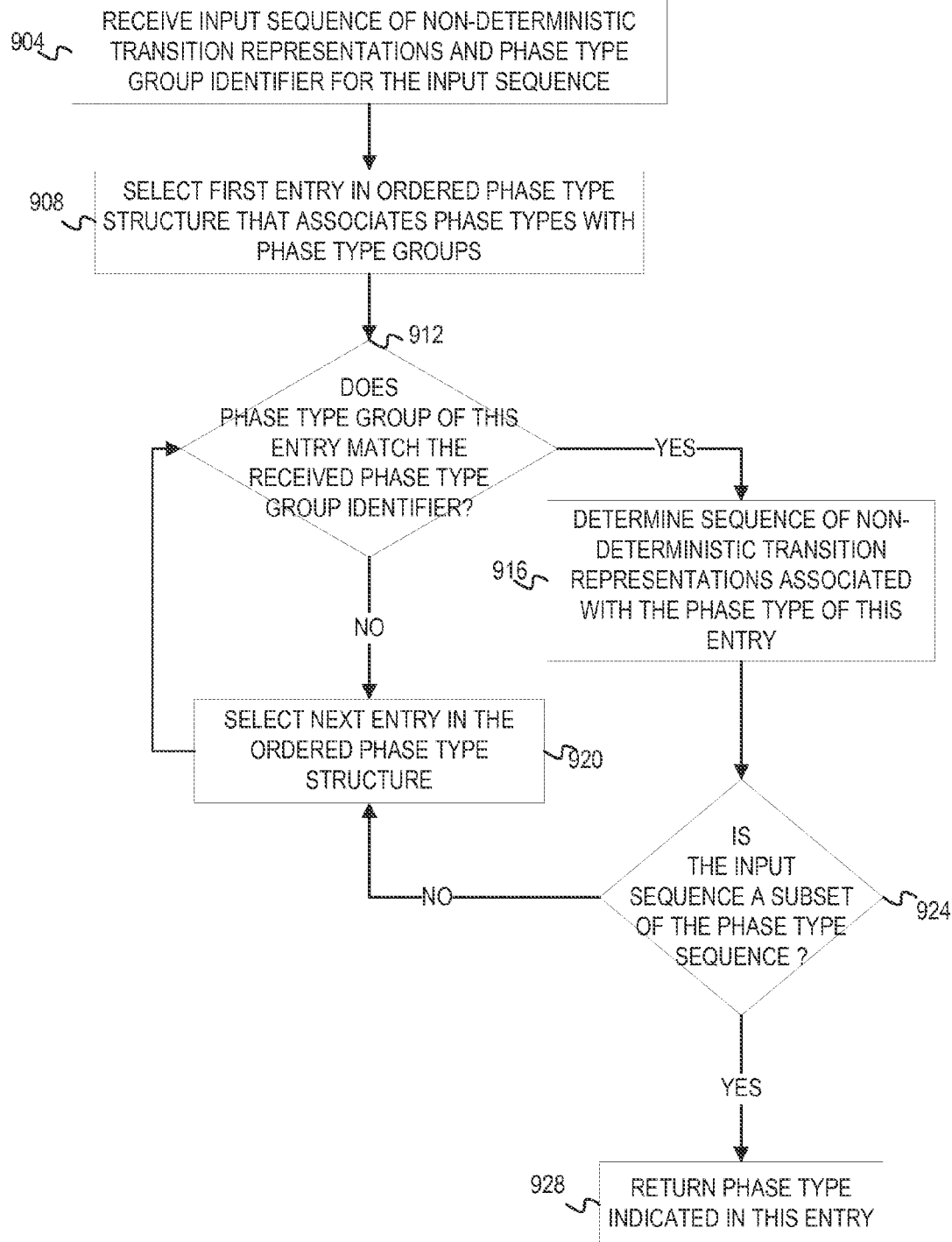


FIG. 9

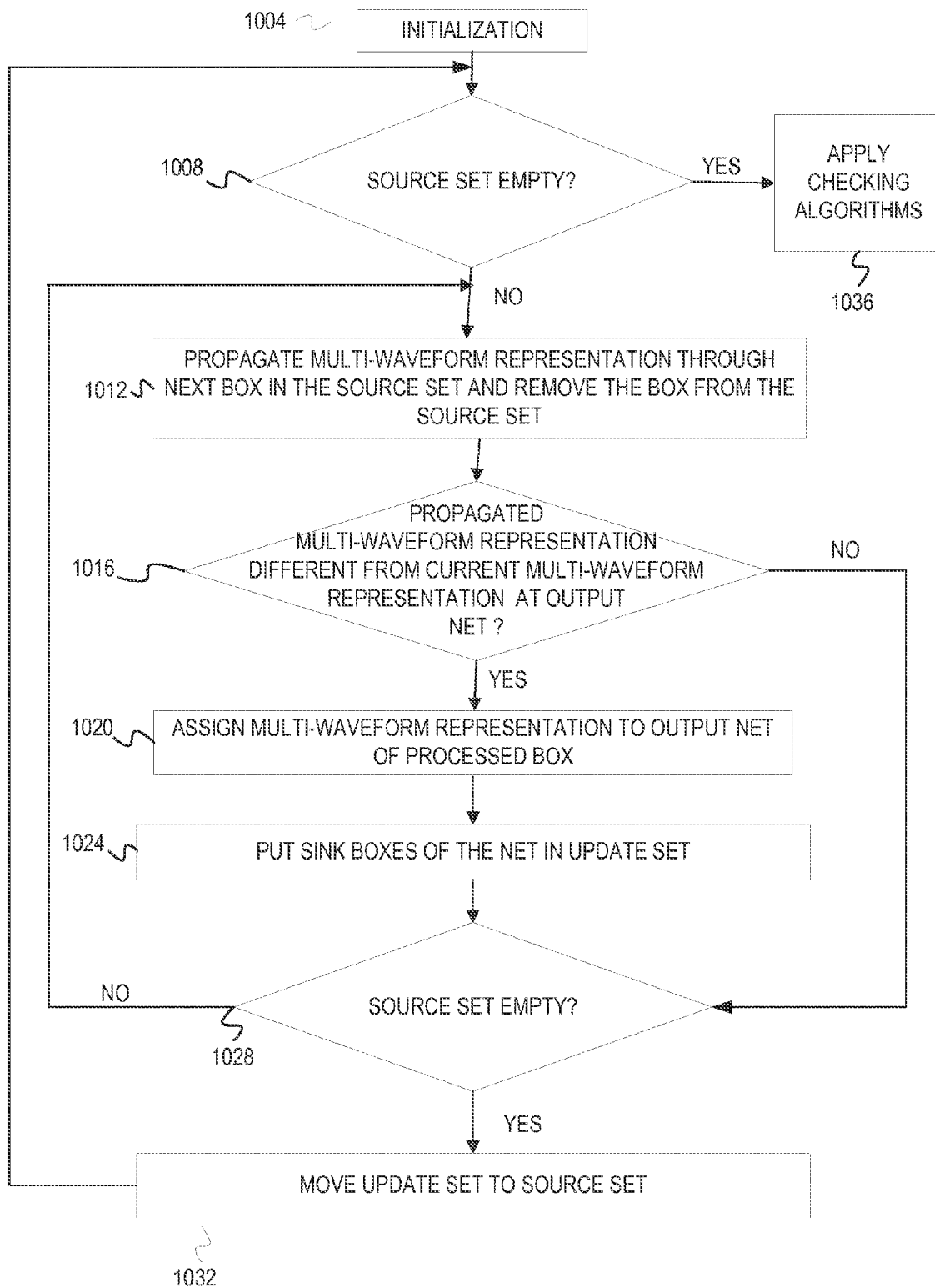


FIG. 10

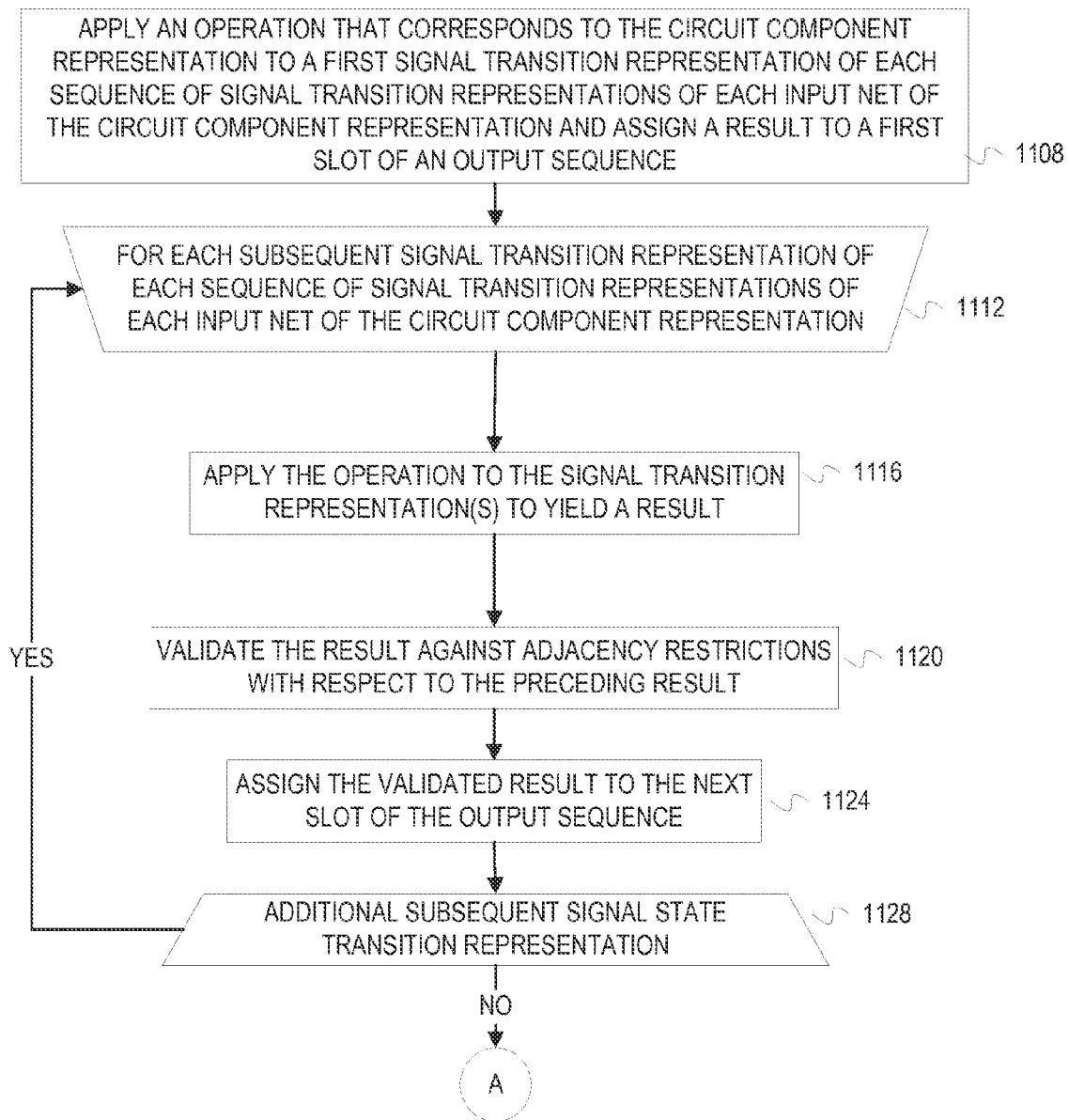


FIG. 11

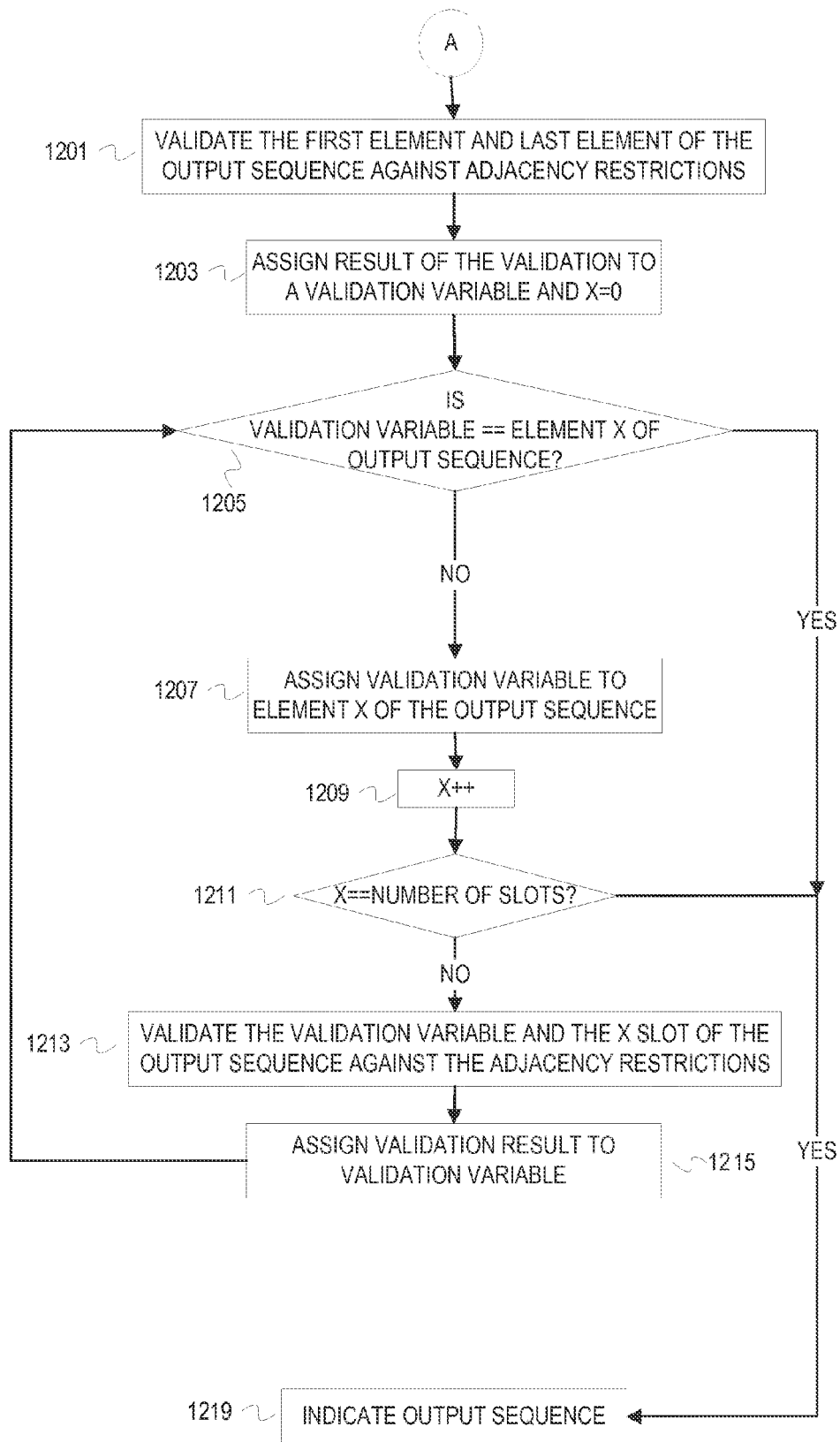


FIG. 12

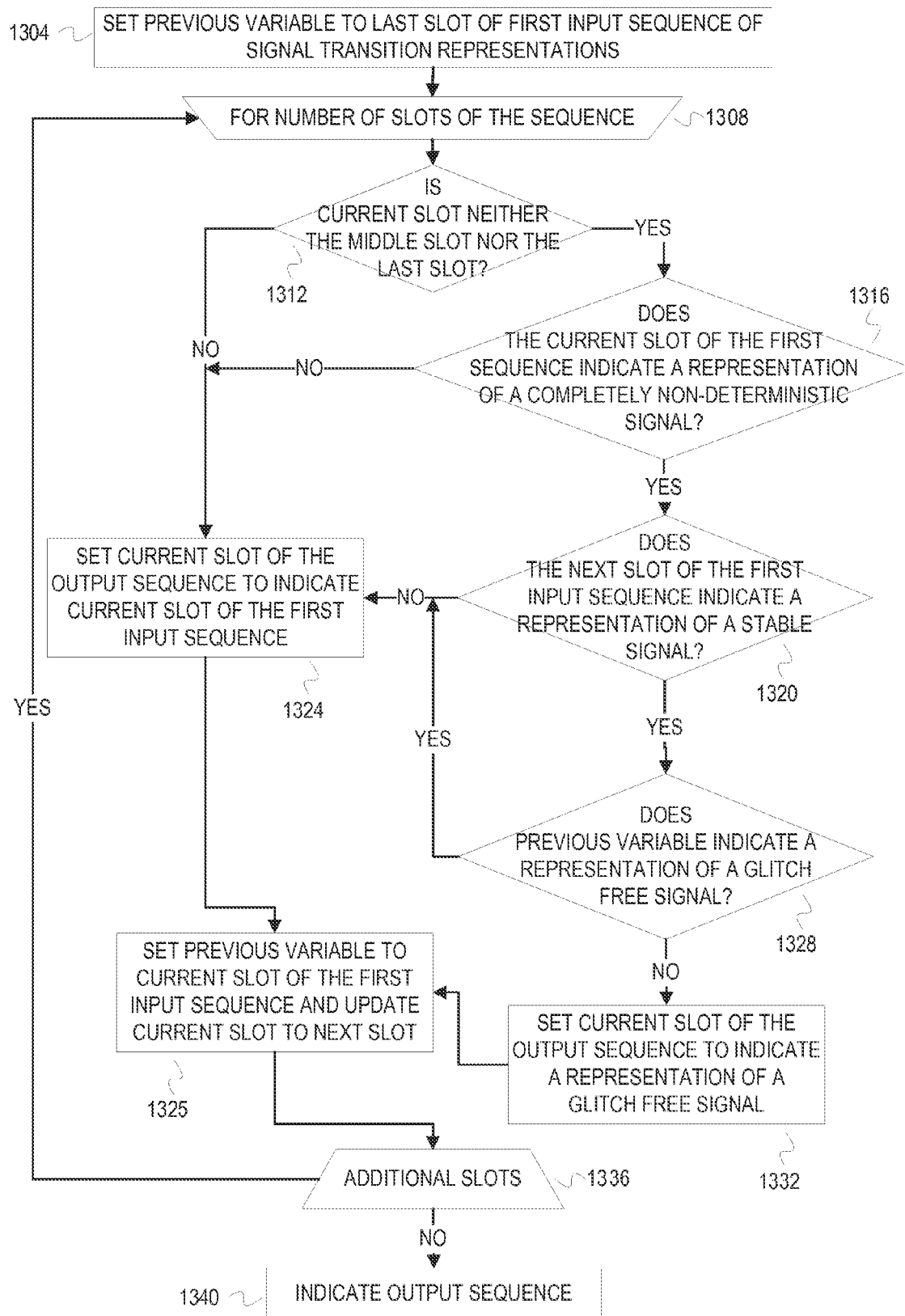


FIG. 13

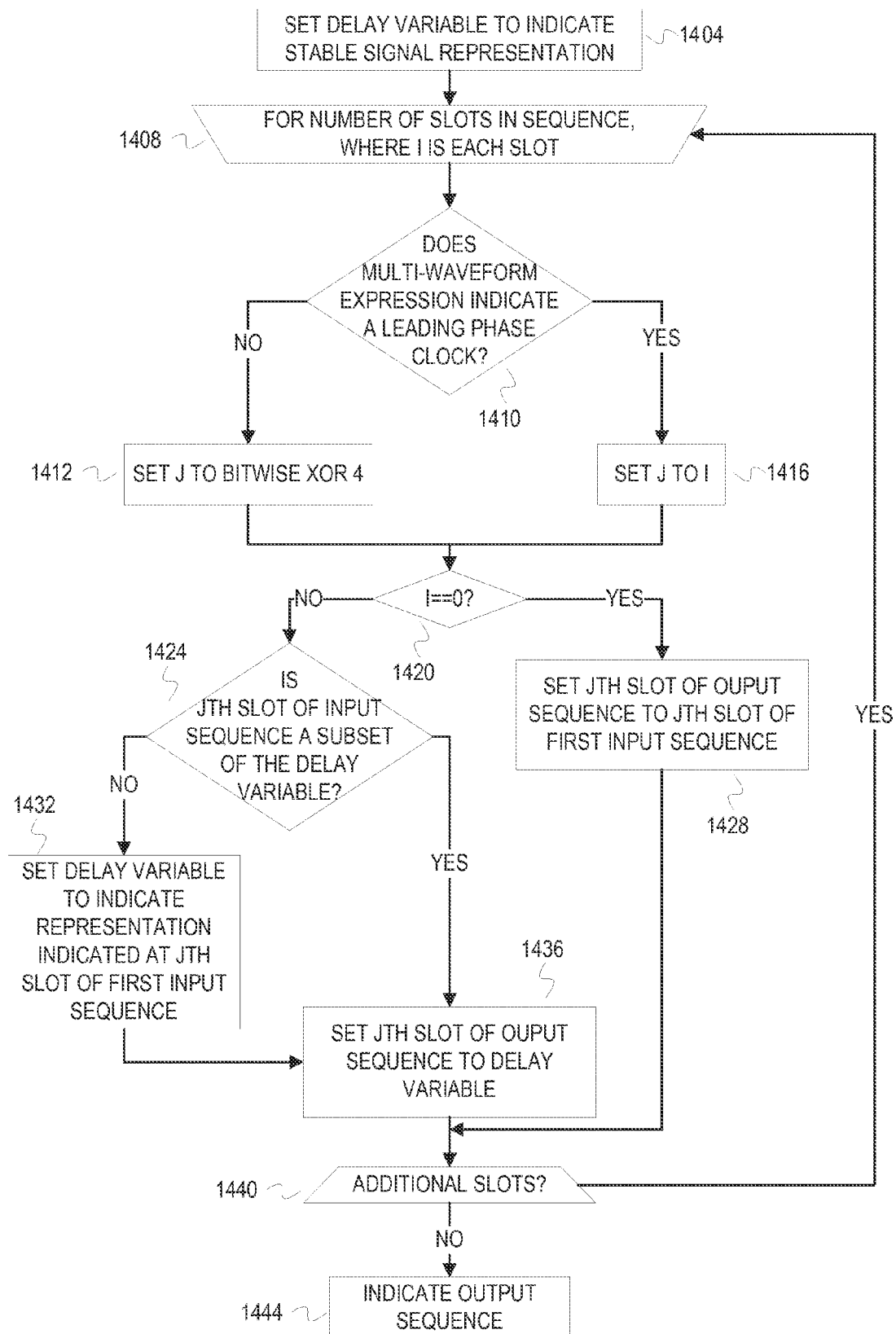


FIG. 14

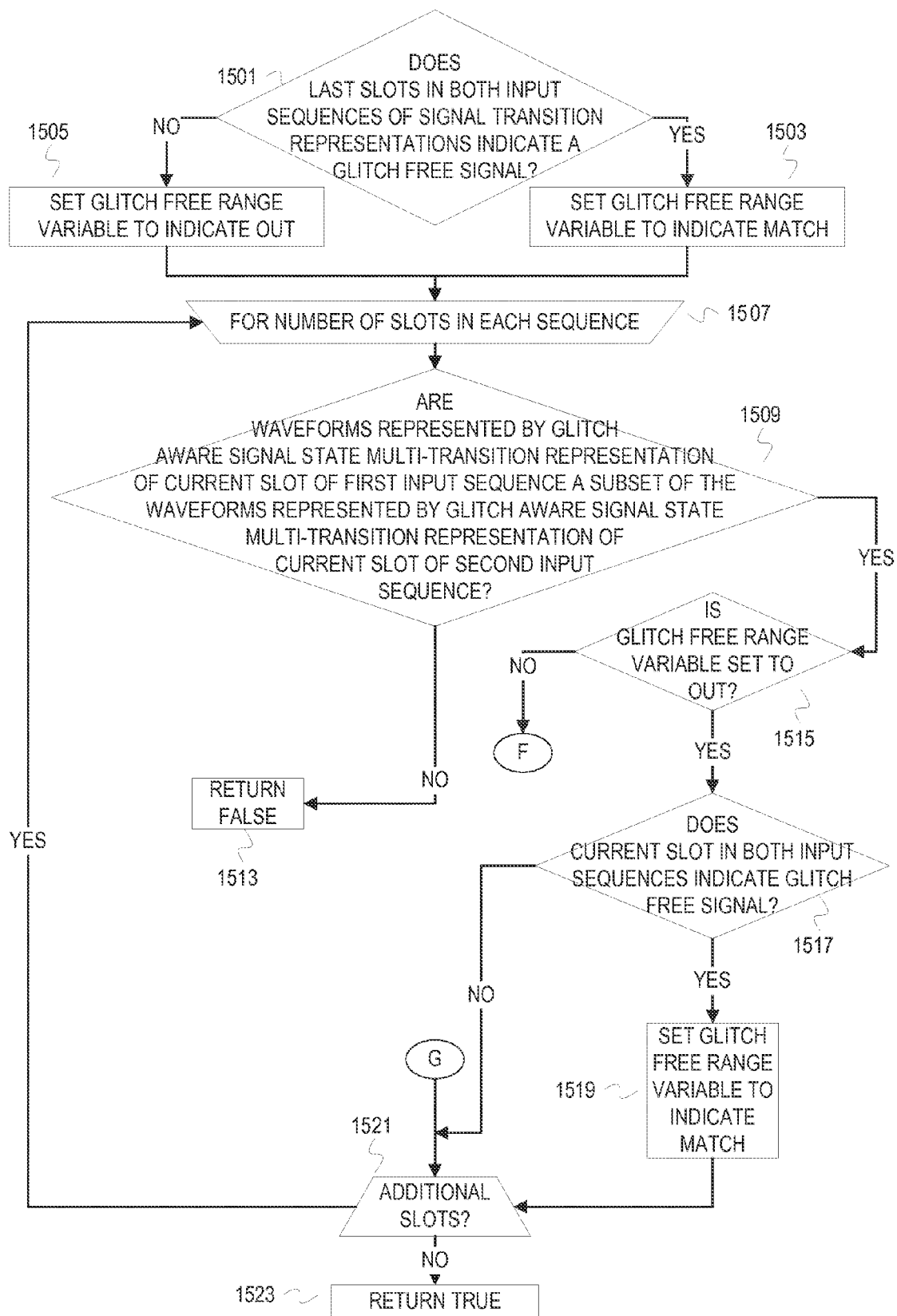


FIG. 15A

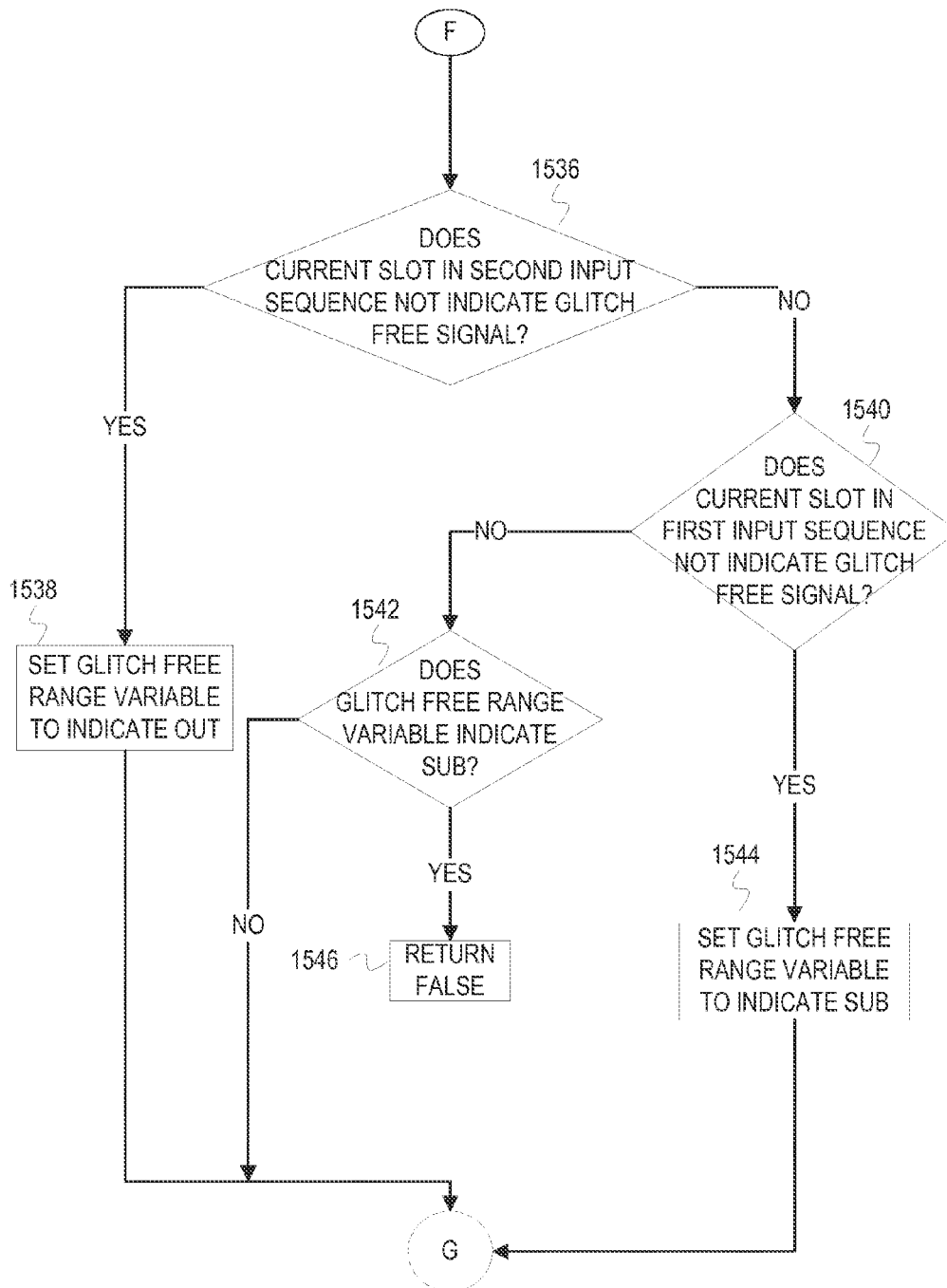


FIG. 15B

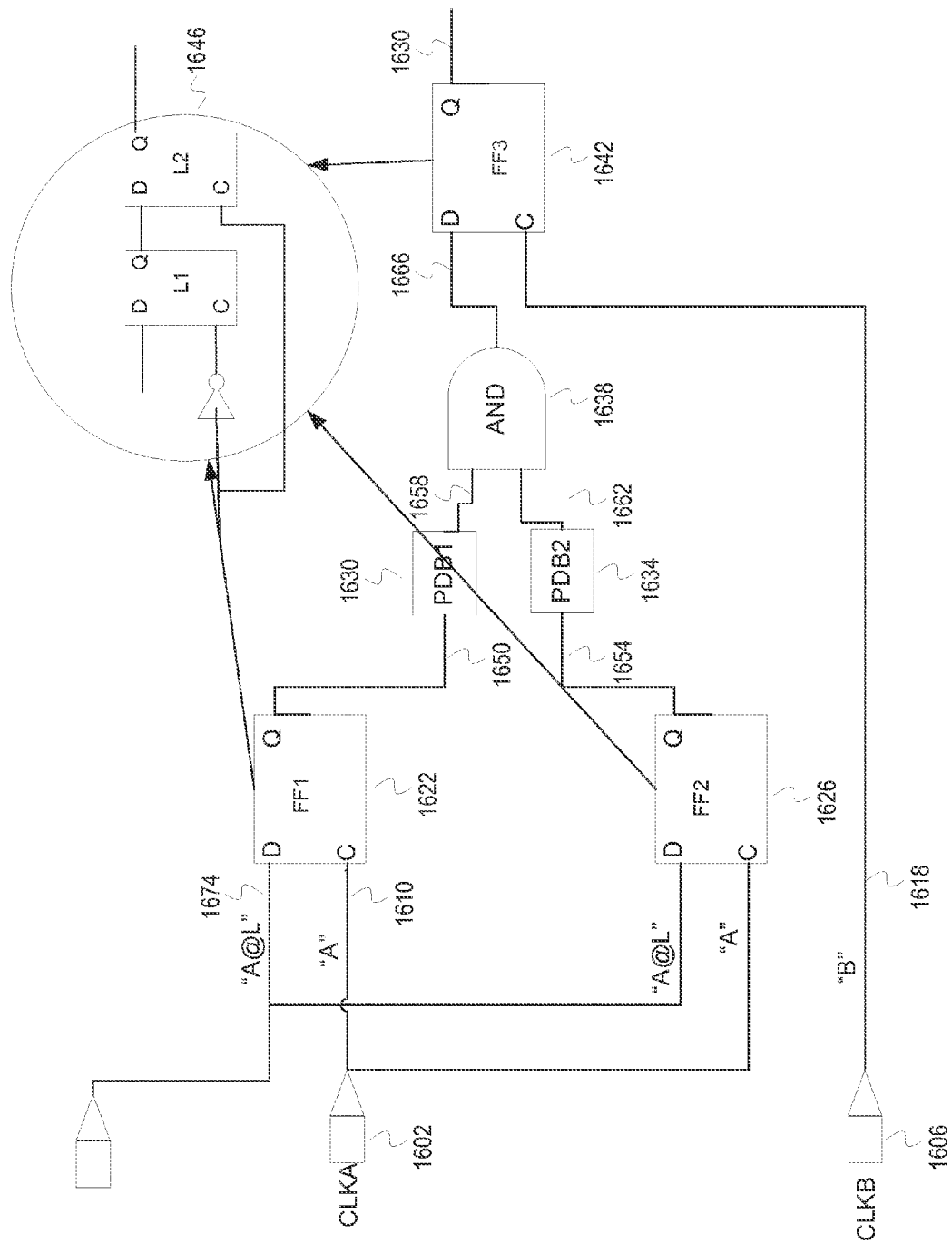
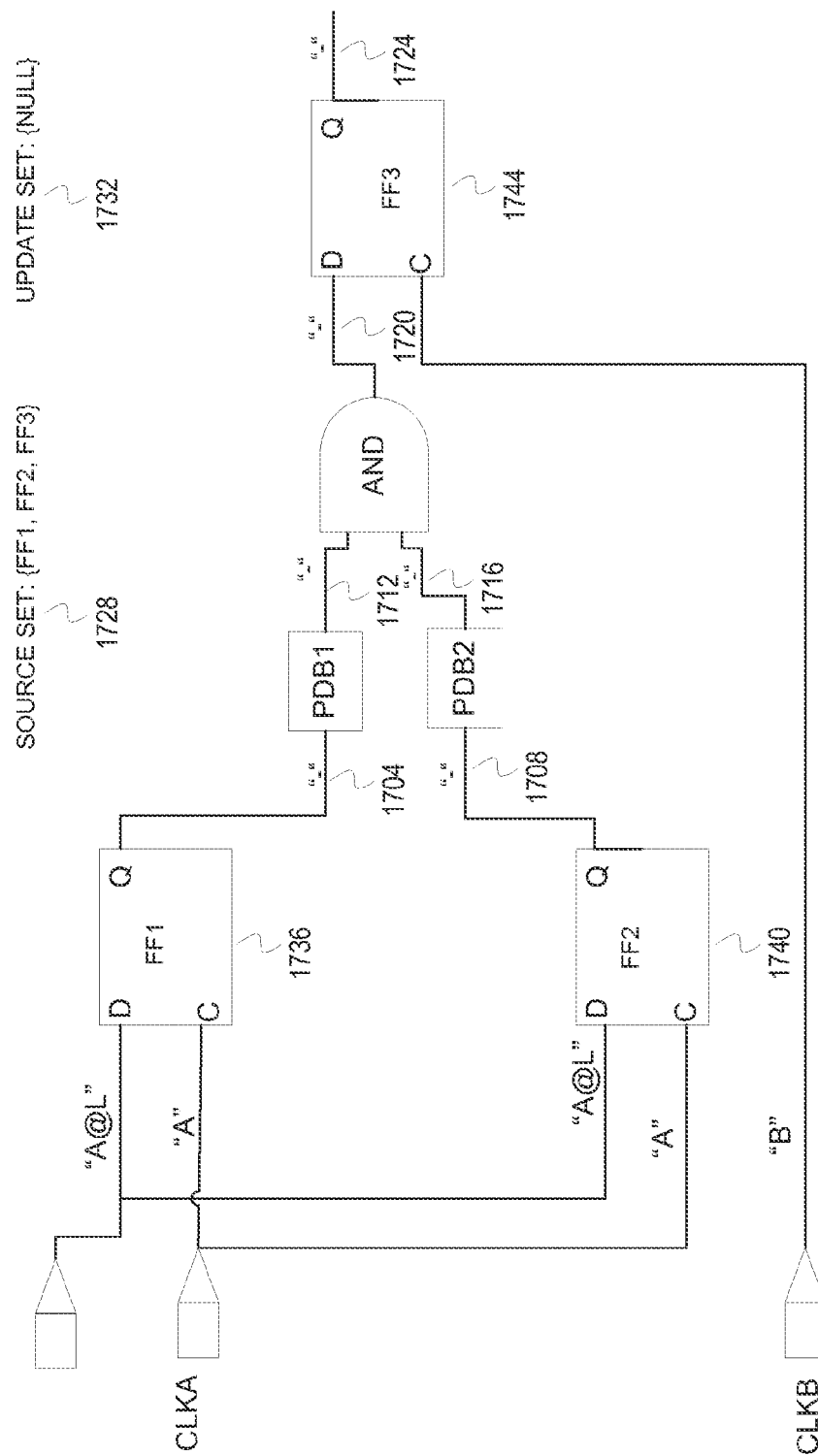


Fig. 16



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7
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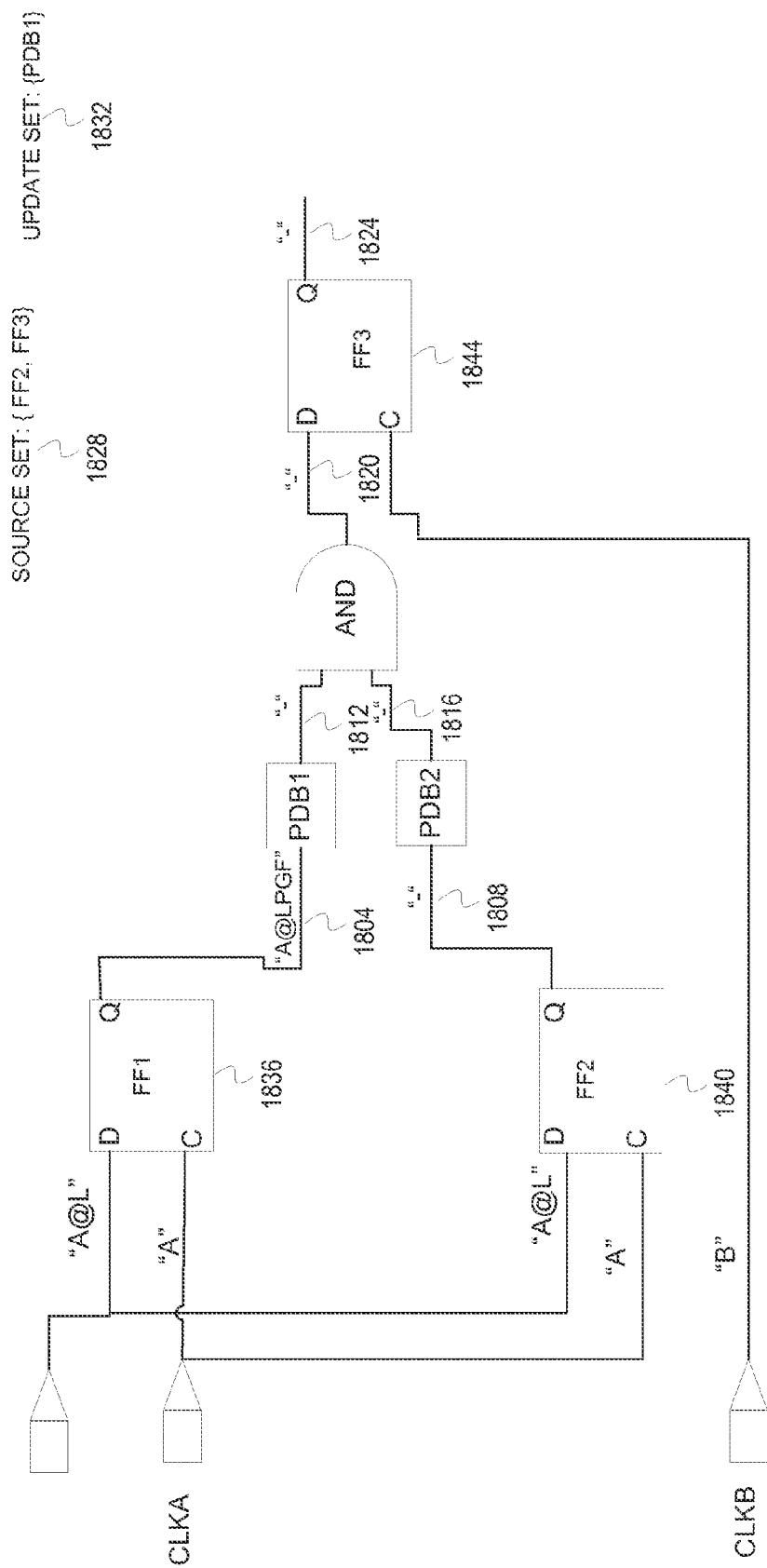


FIG. 18

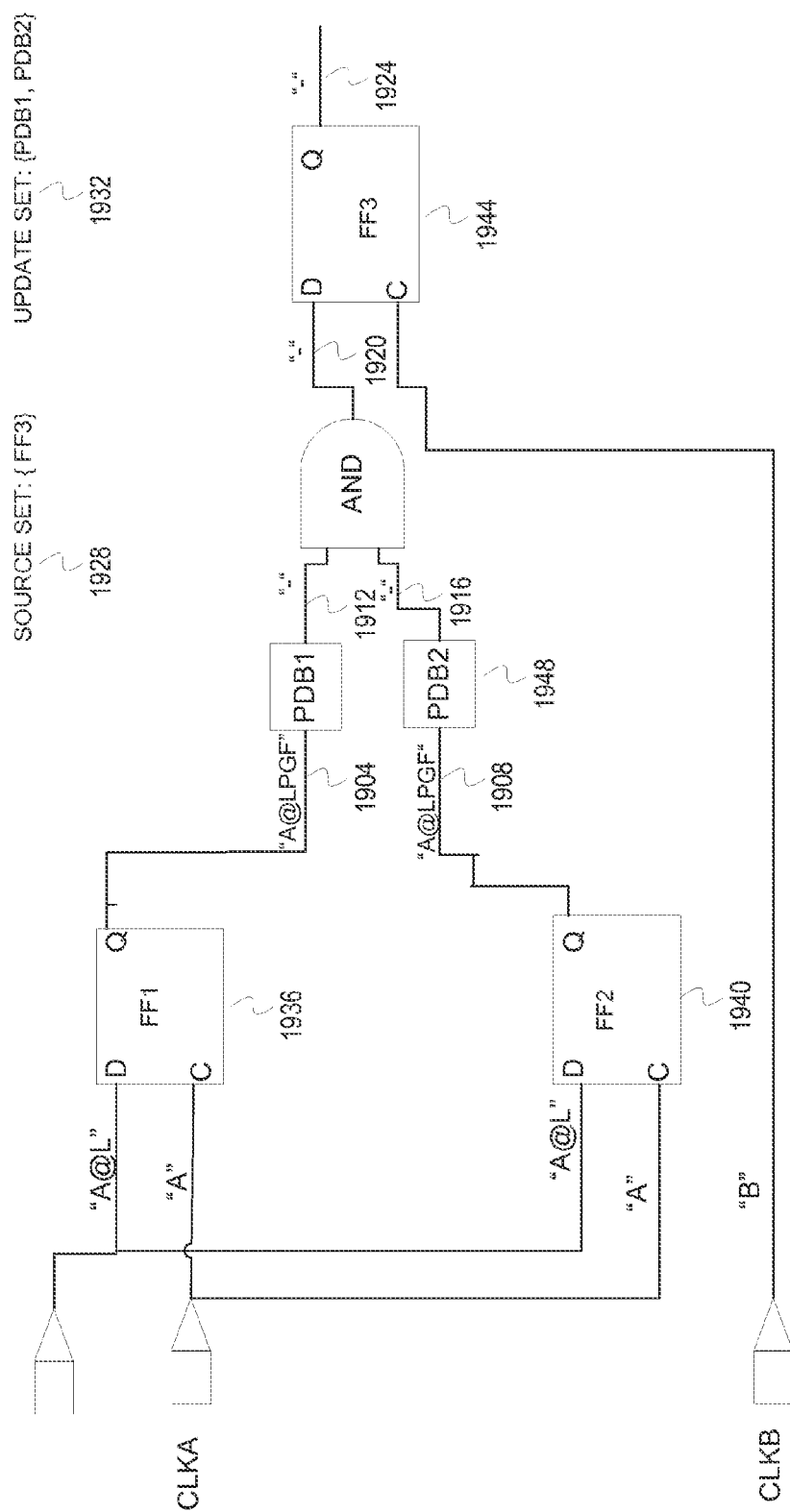


FIG. 19

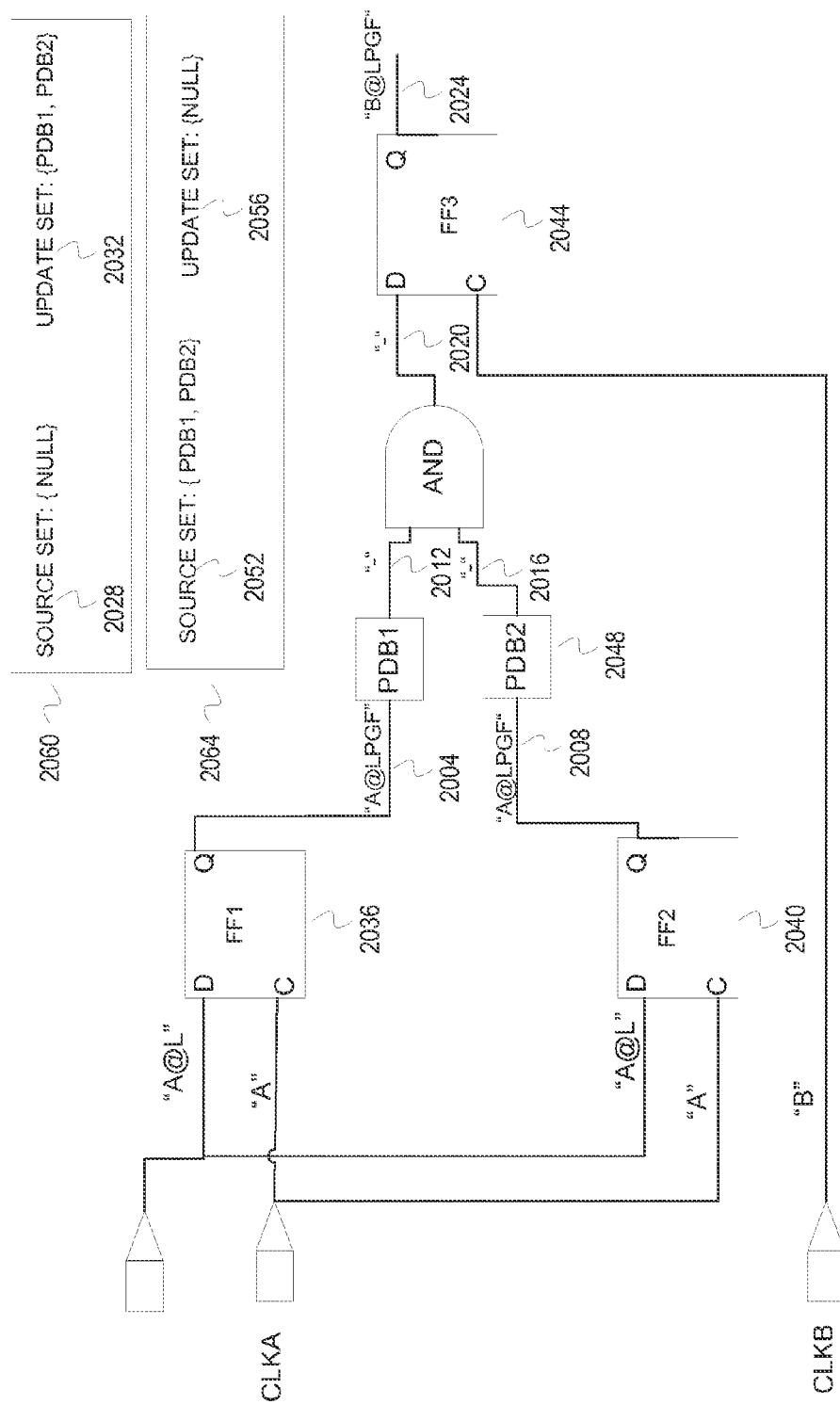


FIG. 20

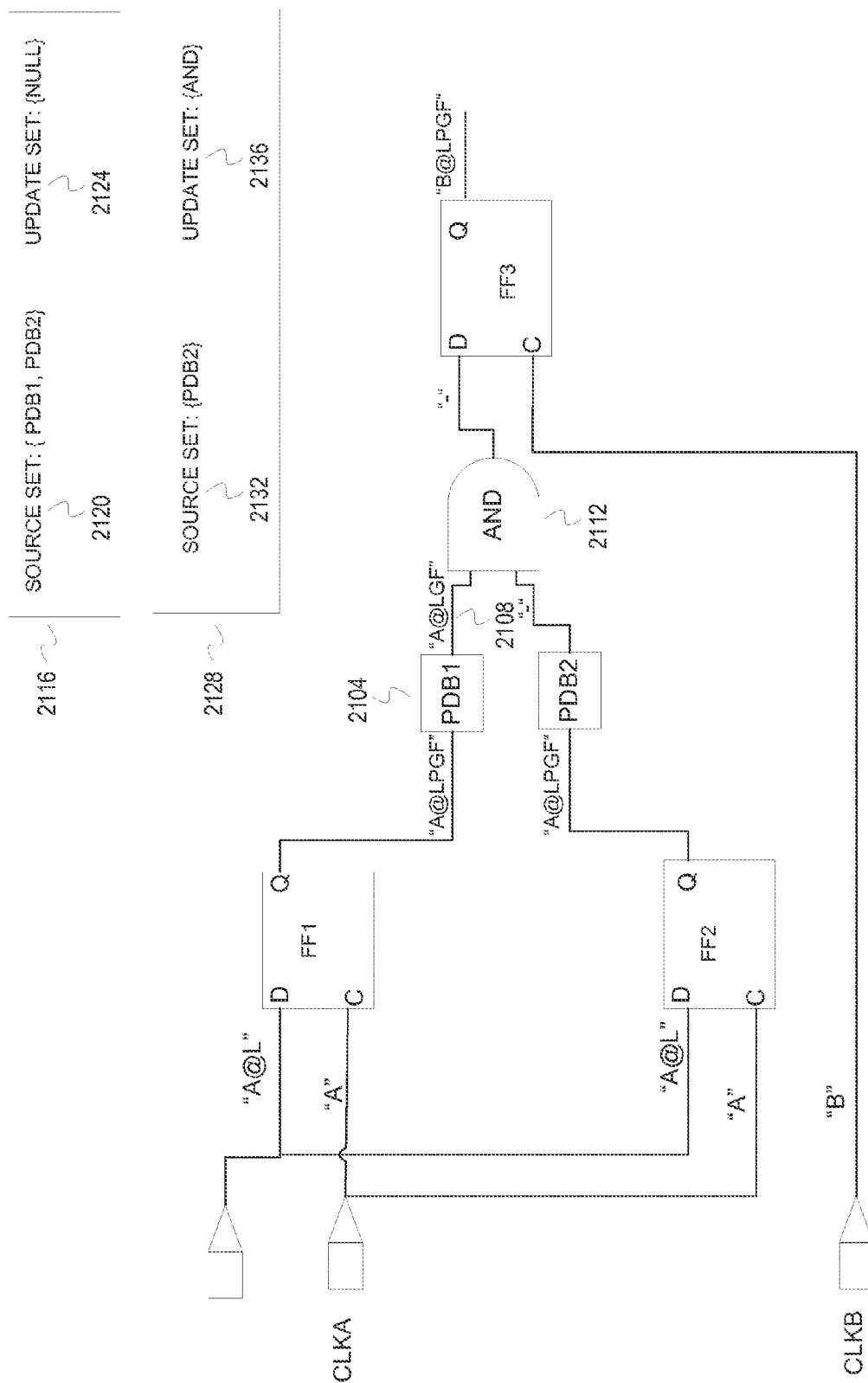


FIG. 21

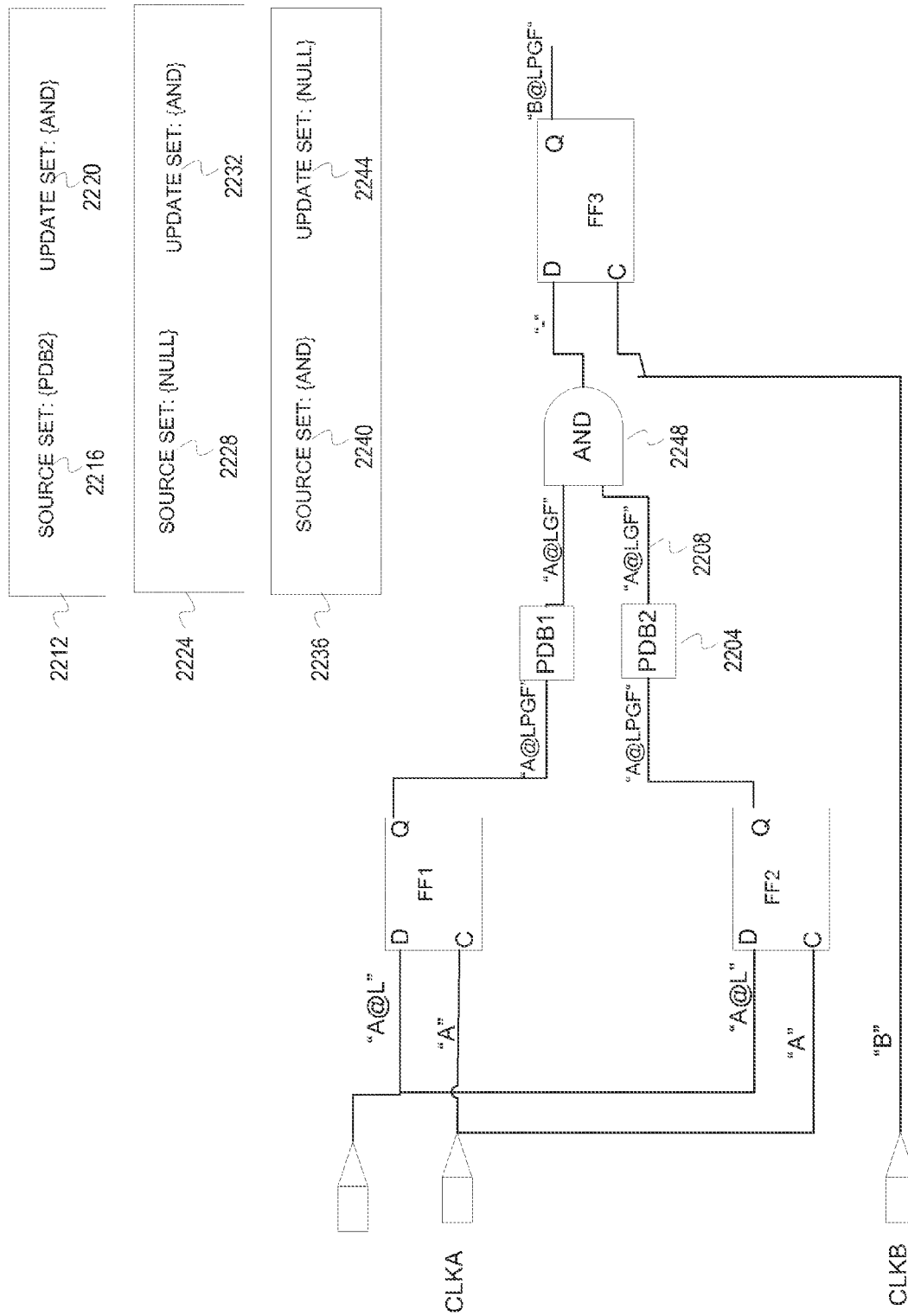
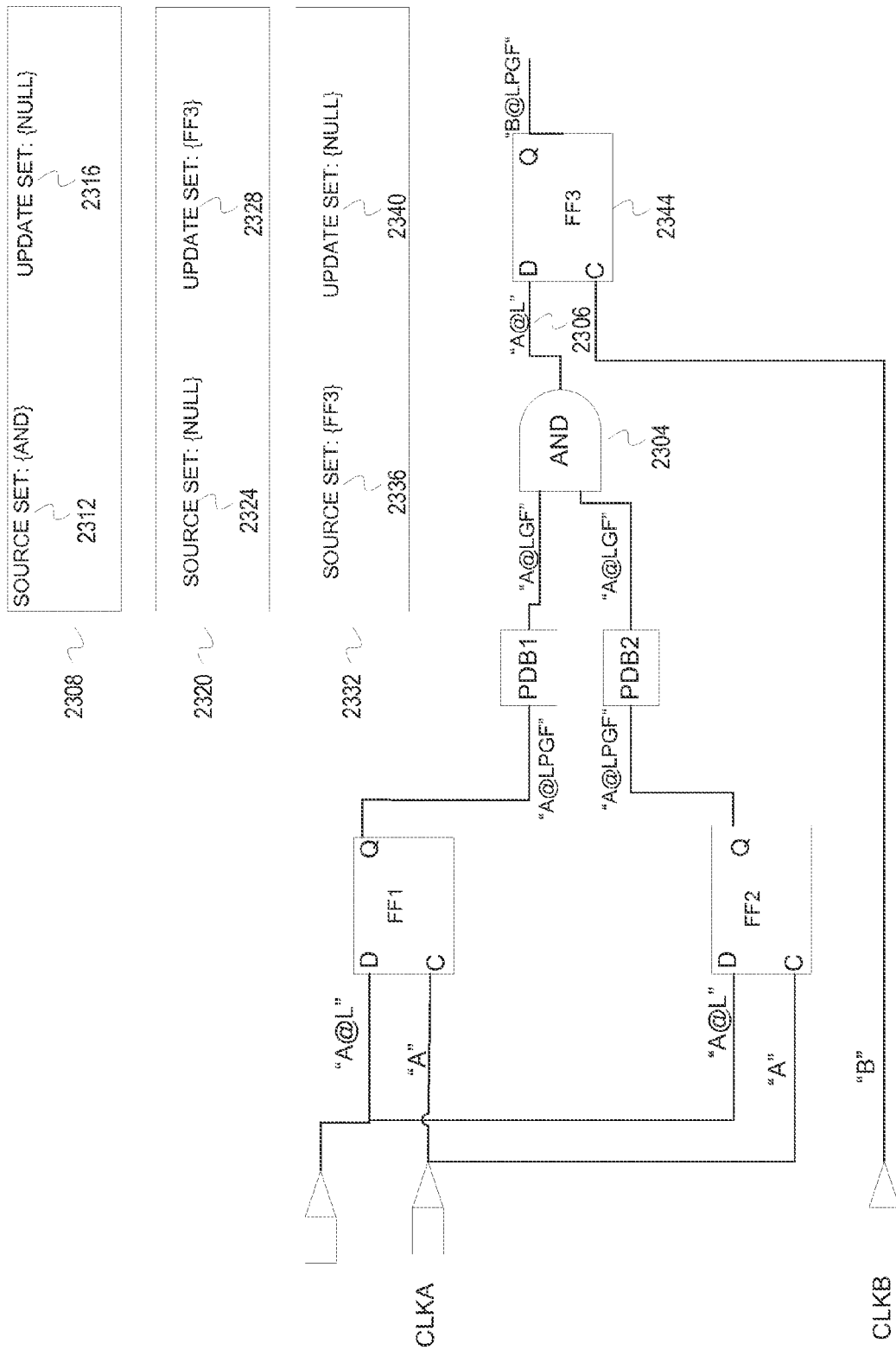


FIG. 22



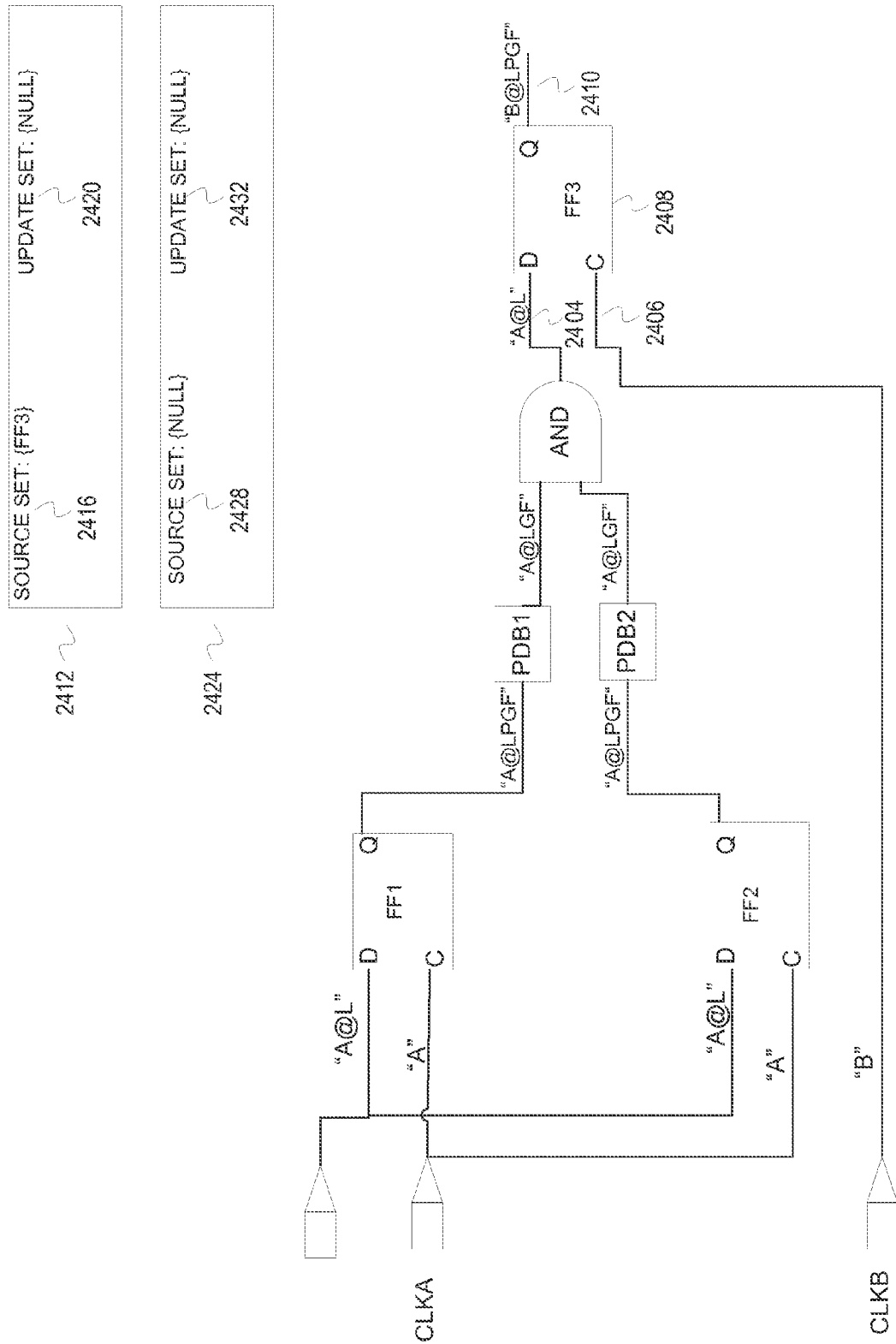


FIG. 24

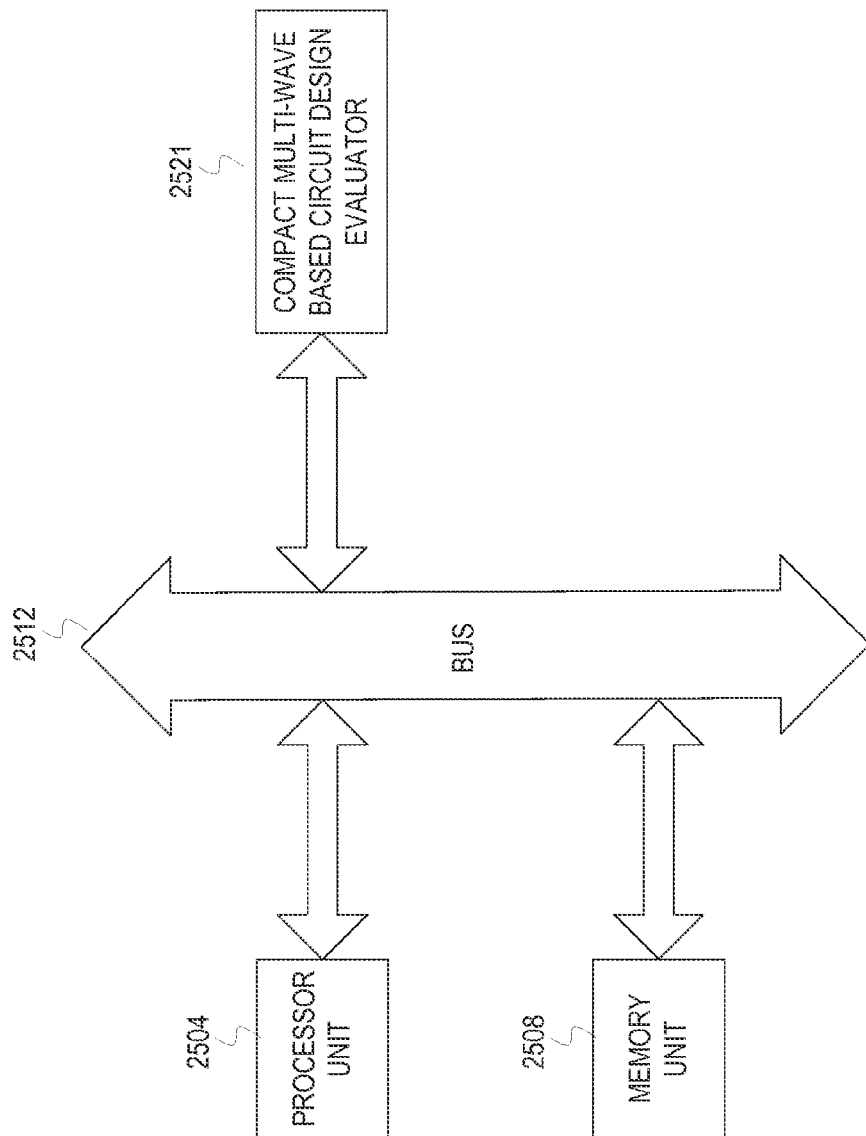


FIG. 25

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CIRCUIT DESIGN EVALUATION WITH COMPACT MULTI-WAVEFORM REPRESENTATIONS

RELATED MATTER

This non-provisional patent application claims benefit of U.S. provisional patent application 61/912,345, which was filed on Dec. 5, 2013 and is incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

Embodiments of the inventive subject matter generally relate to the field of circuit design, and, more particularly, to electronic design automation (EDA) tools to identify potential defects in a register transfer level (RTL) design of a chip or a system on a chip.

EDA tools are used to evaluate chip designs prior to fabrication. The EDA process broadly consists of two steps. The first step is a check of the RTL design logic. The second step is a creation of a physical circuit design from the RTL design. The first step, checking the design logic, can be referred to as RTL design checking. In RTL design checking, a language such as VHDL (Very High Speed Integrated Circuit Hardware Descriptive Language) or Verilog can be used to describe and model the functional behavior of a circuit. RTL design checking itself can be decomposed into two steps. The first step is static checking and the second step is verification, also commonly referred to as a dynamic checking. In static checking, the structure of the design is analyzed without simulating the behavior of the design. Conversely, in verification, the design is simulated by applying test patterns or stimulus to the inputs of the design in an attempt to exhaustively identify possible errors. Verification can be an expensive process for a complex chip or system on a chip. Verification can also be inconclusive, since it is often infeasible to apply all possible test patterns to the inputs of a complex design.

Chips and systems on chips continue to increase in complexity, comprising many systems and sub-systems. These systems and sub-systems might comprise multiple clock domains. A clock domain is a set of sequential logic elements, such as transparent latches and flip-flops, and combinational logic associated with these sequential logic elements that are clocked by a common clock or by clocks having common frequency and a fixed phase relationship. A clock signal causes a change in the state of sequential logic, such as a flip-flop or transparent latch. An asynchronous clock domain crossing is a path from a sequential logic element or other source of state transitions in a design in a first clock domain to a sequential element in a second clock domain through which transitions may occur when the first clock domain operates asynchronously with respect to the second clock domain. When a data signal crosses from a first clock domain to a second clock domain and the first clock domain is asynchronous to the second clock domain, the crossing is referred to as an asynchronous clock domain crossing.

SUMMARY

Embodiments of the inventive subject matter include determining a sequence of signal transition representations associated with an input net of an indicated component in a register transfer level circuit design. Each signal transition representation of the sequence of signal transition representations represents a non-deterministic transition from a pre-

2

vious signal state to a set of one or more possible signal states. An output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net is determined based on the indicated component. It is determined whether the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to restrictions that restrict which signal transition representations can be adjacent to other signal transition representations. The output sequence of signal transition representations is associated with an output net of the indicated component if the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to the restrictions. If the output sequence of signal transition representations does not conform to the restrictions, the output sequence of signal transition representations is modified to conform to the restrictions. In addition, the modified output sequence of signal transition representations is associated with the output net.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present embodiments may be better understood, and numerous objects, features, and advantages made apparent to those skilled in the art by referencing the accompanying drawings.

FIG. 1 is a conceptual diagram that depicts example phase algebra based circuit design evaluation with a compact multi-waveform representation.

FIG. 2 illustrates the relationships among the G-function, a waveform, and the M-function.

FIG. 3 depicts an example conceptual mapping of transitions in multiple waveforms to NTFs.

FIGS. 4A-4B depict example NTF sequences and the information encoded in the sequences.

FIG. 5 is a conceptual diagram that depicts an example hierarchy of relationships among data constructs.

FIG. 6 is a flowchart of example operations for initializing an RTL circuit design representation of phase algebra based evaluation and propagation of compact multi-waveform representations throughout the design representation.

FIG. 7 illustrates terminology associated with the example propagation algorithm and pseudocode to be described.

FIG. 8 is a flowchart of example operations for initializing a circuit design representation for phase algebra based evaluation.

FIG. 9 is a flowchart of example operations for determining an output multi-waveform representation based on an input sequence of non-deterministic transition representations.

FIG. 10 is a flowchart of example operations for propagating multi-waveform representations after initialization of an RTL circuit design representation.

FIGS. 11 and 12 are flowcharts of example operations for applying circuit component based operations to sequences of signal transition representations.

FIG. 13 is a flowchart of example operations for implementing the `cwss_fix_latch` operator.

FIG. 14 is a flowchart of example operations for implementation of the `cwss_path_delay` operator.

FIGS. 15A-15B depict a flowchart of example operations for implementation of the `cwss_is_subset` operator.

FIGS. 16-24 are conceptual depiction of circuit design evaluation with example phase tags.

FIG. 25 depicts an example computer system compact multi-wave based circuit design evaluator.

DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENT(S)

The description that follows includes example systems, methods, techniques, instruction sequences and computer

program products that embody techniques of the present disclosure. However, it is understood that the described embodiments may be practiced without these specific details. For instance, the syntax employed to implement the disclosure can be varied. Additionally, although illustrations refer to a flip-flop as a fundamental circuit component, embodiments need not include a flip-flop. For example, a circuit model can include transparent latches and an inverter instead of a flip-flop as fundamental circuit components. Additionally, embodiments may implement fewer operations than the operations described herein, while other embodiments might be implemented with more operations than the ones described herein. In other instances, well-known instruction instances, protocols, structures and techniques have not been shown in detail in order not to obfuscate the description.

Modern processors or systems on a chip include multiple components. Identifying as many design defects as possible at the static checking phase of an RTL design check increases the efficiency of the verification process, thereby saving time and money. A design tool can implement phase algebra based design evaluation as described herein to efficiently evaluate a circuit design with a compact representation of numerous waveforms without simulating the individual waveforms. Instead of individual waveforms, the phase algebra based design evaluation employs compact representations of a group or set of waveforms.

Phase algebra based evaluation constructs representations of a set of waveforms based on relationships among a devised set of functions that account for the various states of a signal over time, including transitions and glitches. A memorized-transition function, referred to herein as an M-function, indicates signal transitions over time. The output value of the M-function indicates that a transition is occurring/has occurred (e.g., indicated with a value of 1), or no transition has occurred (e.g., indicated with a value of 0) with respect to a given time interval. The M-function can also indicate (e.g.,

with the value of 0) that the given time interval is outside a range of interest. A glitch aware function, referred to herein as a G-function, accounts for the occurrence of a glitch. In general, a glitch occurs due to delays in inputs to a circuit component, delay inherent in a circuit component changing its output to reflect changes to its input, or both. For example, consider a first input and a second input to an AND gate. Assume that the first input at time $t=1$ is expected to transition to a 1 and the second input at time $t=1$ is expected to transition to a 0. However, if the second input is delayed, such that at time $t=1$, the second input is a 1 rather than a 0, then the output of the AND gate will be a 1 rather than a 0 as anticipated. The G-function assumes a value of 1 for all times during which there is interest in determining whether a glitch can occur. The relationships among these functions are depicted in FIG. 2 later.

FIG. 1 is a conceptual diagram that depicts example phase algebra based circuit design evaluation with a compact multi-waveform representation. A circuit design tool performs phase algebra based circuit design evaluation on a machine readable representation of an RTL circuit design 128. The RTL circuit design representation 128 at least includes primary circuit inputs 112 and clock generators 116. A primary input 112 is an input to the circuit itself. A primary input 112 is not driven by any component within the circuit. A clock generator 116 is a circuit component that generates a clock signal. FIG. 1 only depicts a single primary input 116 as representative of the primary inputs throughout the circuit design representation 128 and clock generator output 116 as representative of the clock generators throughout the circuit design representation 128 for ease of understanding. A design tool that uses phase algebra based evaluation is not limited to these two types of components. Table 1 below depicts example RTL circuit design components that can be modeled in an RTL circuit design evaluated by a phase algebra based evaluation tool.

TABLE 1


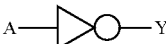



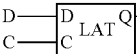
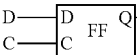
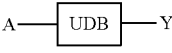

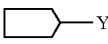
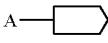
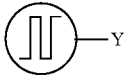


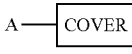
Example RTL Circuit Design Components			
Component	Symbol	Output Behavior (at time t , as function of input(s))	Comments
buffer		$Y(t) = A(t)$	
inverter		$Y(t) = \text{not } (A(t))$	
2-way AND		$Y(t) = \text{and } (A(t), B(t))$	
2-way OR		$Y(t) = \text{or } (A(t), B(t))$	
2-way XOR		$Y(t) = \text{xor } (A(t), B(t))$	Although XOR (exclusive-OR) can be modeled using AND gates and inverters, having a separate component allows more precise waveform calculations.
latch		$Q(t) = D(t-1) \text{ if } C(t-1) = 1 \text{ else } Y(t-1)$	The latch samples when the clock is high. There is a unit delay from any change on an input to a change on the output.
flip-flop		$Q(t) = D(t-1) \text{ if } (C(t-1) = 1 \text{ and } C(t-2) = 0) \text{ else } Y(t-1)$	The flip-flop samples when the clock transitions high. There is a unit delay from any change on an input to a change on the output.

TABLE 1-continued

Example RTL Circuit Design Components			
Component	Symbol	Output Behavior (at time t, as function of input(s))	Comments
unit delay block		$Y(t) = A(t-1)$	The unit delay block (UDB) represents a short (unit) delay. It may be used, for example, to create a pulsed (chopped) clock from a non-pulsed clock.
path delay block		$Y(t) = A(t-n), 0 \leq n \leq N$; where N is an unknown upper bound	The path delay block (PDB) represents a combinational path delay, which is typically not known in an RTL model, but is assumed to have some upper bound determined by static timing analysis. An embodiment of this invention can insert this component into the RTL model to model such delays. For example, inserting it on the input side of an AND gate models the fact that AND gate inputs can arrive at different times, causing glitches.
primary input		$Y(t) = \text{unknown}$	This represents an input to the circuit being checked.
primary output			This represents an output of the circuit being checked.
clock generator		Y oscillates periodically between 0 and 1.	This represents a clock source within the verification model. Alternatively, clocks can be sourced by primary inputs to the model.
random box		$Y(t) = \text{random}$	This would only appear in a verification model, not an actual circuit. It generates a random zero or one at each unit of time. Verification tools typically use a component like this to model nondeterminism.
assert box			This would only appear in a verification model, not an actual circuit. It represents a property to be verified; specifically, that the input is always equal to 1. The verification process must attempt to find any situation in which an assert box input is not one, and if found, report it to the user as a property violation.
cover box			This would only appear in a verification model, not an actual circuit. It represents a condition to be exercised by a simulation. The verification process must attempt to find one or more situations in which a cover box input is one, and if found, report them to the user as coverage events.

A compact multi-waveform representation **104** is provided for the RTL circuit design **108**. For example, the multi-waveform representation **104** is provided in a RTL description using attributes or in a file supplied as input to the circuit design tool. The circuit design tool determines compact multi-waveform representations generated on nets throughout the RTL circuit design dependent upon the components traversed by the compact multi-waveform representations. Example notations “A” **120** and “A@L” **124** for compact multi-waveform representations are depicted. These notations are referred to as “phase tags” herein. This example uses this phase tag to illustrate handling of a virtual clock identified as ‘A’. In this description, a phase tag and a phase type are distinguished. A phase type is a construct (e.g., variable or notation) that represents a generic virtual clock. Use of a phase type would be sufficient in a design that contemplates a single virtual clock. A phase tag is a construct that identifies a virtual clock. Although a phase tag can be used in a design that contemplates a single virtual clock, the utility of the phase tag becomes apparent when multiple virtual clocks are being considered. In addition, operators associated with phase tags (“phase tag operators”) manipulate results of phase type operators as appropriate for multiple virtual clocks. The particular terminology used to distinguish these constructs should not be used to limit claim scope. For this illustration, the notation “A” represents a set of signals or

waveforms with a clock signal behavior corresponding to a virtual clock A. The notation “A@L” represents a set of signals or waveforms corresponding to a latch clocked by the leading edge of the virtual clock identified as A. The tables for phase types use the notation ‘C’ as a general identifier of any virtual clock. The majority of this description focuses on use of phase types and phase type operators.

The circuit design representation **128** also includes an inverter **132** and an AND gate **140**. A net **148** is graphically depicted as connecting output of the clock generator **116** to input into the inverter **132**. A net **131** is graphically depicted connecting output of the inverter **132** to a first input of the AND gate **140**. A net **152** is graphically depicted as connecting output of the primary input element **112** to a second input of the AND gate **140**. The phase algebra based evaluation tool determines that inputting the compact multi-waveform representation noted by the notation **120** into the inverter **132** will yield a compact multi-waveform representation with a notation “~A” **126**, which represents a set of signals or waveforms with an inverted clock signal behavior. The phase algebra based evaluation tool determines that inputting the compact multi-waveform representation noted by the notation **124** and the compact multi-waveform representation noted with the notation **126** into the AND gate **140** will yield a compact multi-waveform representation with a notation “*” with the basic phase algebra since the basic phase algebra does not

have values defined to handle a gated clock. If the clock gating algebra is being employed, then the notation yielded would be “($\sim A$) %*” **126**. The notation “*” represents all sets of waveforms. The notation “($\sim A$) %*” represents a set of waveforms characterized as a low-gated inverted clock. The phase algebra based evaluation tool propagates compact multi-waveform representations throughout nets of the circuit design representation **128** using look up tables constructed based, at least in part, on a set of possible waveform states. When glitch awareness is implemented, a phase algebra based evaluation tool will propagate compact multi-waveform representations on nets throughout a design representation using look up tables that are constructed based on a set of possible waveform states, and both the M-function and the G-function. The look up tables and basis for the look up tables are discussed later.

When compact multi-waveform representations have been determined, a checking unit **172** of the evaluation tool analyzes the compact multi-waveform representations associated with the nets of the design representation **128**. The checking unit **172** can identify defects in the design using these compact multi-waveform representations. For example, the checking unit **172** will evaluate the transition behavior represented by a compact multi-waveform representation associated with a net against a rule or constraint of the net. The rule or constraint of the net can be explicit (e.g., directly defined in association with the net) or implicit (e.g., indirectly associated with the net via a characteristic of the net or at least one of the sinks of the net).

Referring back to Table 1, the first column of Table 1 includes common names for the example components and the second column of Table 1 includes symbols that commonly represent the example circuit components. The third column of Table 1 indicates the relationships between inputs to the circuit components and the outputs that the circuit components generate based on the inputs furnished to the circuit components. The transparent latch of row six of Table 1 is an example circuit component. Row six, column three of Table 1 specifies the relationship between the inputs to the transparent latch and the output that the transparent latch generates. The transparent latch takes two inputs: a data signal, represented by D, and a clock signal, represented by C. The clock signal can be generated by a clock generator, listed in row 12 of Table 1 or other harmonic oscillator. The transparent latch samples the data signal D when the clock signal equals 1. Thus, the output Q of the transparent latch at time t, denoted Q(t), equals the data value D at time t-1, denoted D(t-1), when the clock at time t-1 takes a value of 1, denoted C(t-1)=1. Otherwise, the output Q of the transparent latch does not change. In another embodiment, the transparent latch samples the data signal D at all times during which the clock signal assumes a value of 0 rather than a value of 1. The flip-flop, shown in row seven of Table 1, is another circuit component. Like the transparent latch, the flip-flop receives two inputs, a data signal D and a clock signal C. The output Q of the flip-flop equals the value of the data signal. The flip-flop samples the data signal only during a small interval of time when the clock signal transitions from a 0 to a 1, unlike the transparent latch, which continuously samples the data signal when the clock signal equals a 1. Thus, if the data signal at the time at which the clock transitions from a 0 to a 1 is a 0, then the output of the flip-flop will become a 0. Otherwise, if the data signal at the time at which the clock transitions from a 0 to a 1 is a 1, then the output of the flip-flop will become a 1. Column three of Table 1 specifies this relationship. The output of the flip-flop Q(t) at time t equals the value of the data signal at time t-1, denoted D(t-1), if the clock signal at time

t-1 denoted C(t-1)=1, and the clock signal at time t-2, denoted C(t-2)=0, thereby signifying a transition in the clock signal from a 0 to a 1. The flip-flop can be modeled by two transparent latches. The transparent latch and flip-flop each are modeled to include a unit delay such that the transparent latch and flip-flop express the output shown in column three of Table 1 after a unit has elapsed from the time of receipt of an input that causes a change in state of the output. The combinational logic components shown in Table 1, such as the AND gates shown in row three, are modeled to have no delay between the time that the component receives an input and the time that the component generates an output based on the received input. However, a combinational logic circuit component will likely show a delay between receiving an input and generating an output. To model such a delay, a path delay block (PDB) can be implemented. A PDB (row nine in Table 1) represents a nondeterministic, bounded delay on the time necessary for a combinational circuit component to generate an output based on received inputs. The foregoing timing assumptions associated with the circuit components avoid modeling physical time, and allow modeling abstract time. This conserves computational resources.

FIG. 2 illustrates the relationships among the G-function, a waveform, and the M-function. The relationship between the G-function (g(t)), the M-function (m(t)), and a waveform (w(t)) is given by the following expressions: if g(t)=0, then m(t)=0; otherwise, if g(t)=1, then m(t)=1 if and only if w(t) does not equal w(t-1) or m(t-1)=1, where g(t) is the value of the G-function at time t, m(t) is the value of the M-function at time t, and w(t) is the value of a waveform at time t. As depicted, the conditions for an M-function to equal 1 are that w(t) does not equal w(t-1), or that m(t-1) equals one. These conditions correspond to transitions in the modeled waveform w(t). With the M-function and the G-function, the previous state of a signal can be related to multiple possible next states of the signal with a compact representation. Each of these relationships is referred to herein as a nondeterministic transition function (“NTF”). FIG. 3 provides a diagram to help illustrate how a sequence of NTFs can represent multiple waveforms in a compact manner.

FIG. 3 depicts an example conceptual mapping of transitions in multiple waveforms to NTFs. The mapping of time to NTFs is referred to as a waveform set function (WSF). A WSF **304** specifies a set of waveforms **312**, **316**, **320**, and **324**. Each of the waveforms **312**, **316**, **320**, and **324** assumes a value of either a 0 or a 1 at each instant of time. For example, waveform **312** assumes a value of 0 at all times before time t=0, and at times t=0 through t=6, but transitions to a 1 at time t=7 and assumes a value of 1 between times t=7 and t=9, and at all times after time t=9. These waveforms can be grouped together to form a single waveform set (compact multi-waveform), depicted by a waveform set diagram **308**. The waveform set diagram **308** encodes information about the aggregate behavior of the waveforms **312**, **316**, **320**, and **324**. Associated with the waveform set diagram **308** is a waveform set function (WSF) **304**. The WSF **304** maps each unit of time to an NTF. Each NTF relates a previous state of a waveform or set of waveforms to a set of possible next states. Although separated by a few layers of constructs, the compact multi-waveform representations mentioned earlier are based upon sequences of these NTFs. The NTFs, which can be considered the building blocks, will be first described. Constructs that build upon these NTFs will then be described. FIG. 5 depicts an example hierarchy of data constructs/objects built upon NTFs revealing relationships between the previously mentioned phase tags and NTFs. FIG. 5 will be explored in more detail after describing the data constructs individually.

Table 2 identifies NTFs employed for phase algebra based RTL design evaluation.

TABLE 2

Non-deterministic Transition Functions									
Symbol for Waveform Set Diagram at time t									
NTF Name	Function Table (x = don't care)		G-value	if follows F0 or FL at t-1	if follows F1 or FH at t-1	if follows FG at t-1	if follows FN at t-1	if follows FF, FR, FS or FX at t-1	Description (signal behavior at time t)
F0	input (mp, wp) (x, x)	output WN {0}	0	not allowed (use FL instead)	t : 	t : 	t : 	t : 	Signal is 0 (stable or falling edge).
F1	input (mp, wp) (x, x)	output WN {1}	0	t : 	not allowed (use FH instead)	t : 	t : 	t : 	Signal is 1 (stable or rising edge).
FF	input (mp, wp) (x, 0) (x, 1)	output WN {0, 1}	0	not allowed (use FL instead)	t : 	t : 	t : 	t : 	Signal is either stable or falling (nondeterministic).
FG	input (mp, wp) (0, x) (1, 0) (1, 1)	output WN {0, 1}	1	t : 	t : 	t : 	t : 	t : 	Signal tray transition at most once within time range having contiguous range of FG (glitch-free).
FH	input (mp, wp) (x, x)	output WN {1}	0	not allowed (use F1 instead)	t : 	not allowed (use F1 instead)	t : 	not allowed (use F1 instead)	Signal is stable 1 (High). Although the transition function is identical to F1, the adjacency restriction implies there can be no transition.
FL	input (mp, wp) (x, x)	output WN {0}	0	t : 	not allowed (use F0 instead)	not allowed (use F0 instead)	t : 	not allowed (use F0 instead)	Signal is stable 0 (Low). Although the transition function is identical to F0, the adjacency restriction implies there can be no transition.
FN	input (mp, wp) (x, x)	output WN { }	0	t : 	t : 	t : 	t : 	t : 	Signal is to be ignored. The NTF returns a Null (empty) set, meaning that no waveform can be in any set specified using this NTF. While this does not accurately describe a signal, it is mathematically useful to define operators which ignore the contributions of an input.
FR	input (mp, wp) (x, 0) (x, 1)	output WN {0, 1}	0	t : 	not allowed (use FH instead)	t : 	t : 	t : 	Signal is either stable or rising (nondeterministic).
FS	input (mp, wp) (x, 0) (X, 1)	output WN {0, 1}	0	not allowed (use F0 instead)	not allowed (use F0 instead)	t : 	not allowed (use F0 instead)	t : 	Signal is Stable. It can be low or high, but there can be no transition.
FX	input (mp, wp) (x, x)	output WN {0, 1}	0	not allowed (use FR instead)	not allowed (use FR instead)	t : 	t : 	t : 	Signal is completely nondeterministic (stable, rising or falling).

The first column of Table 2 is a label given to each NTF. The label in the first column of Table 2 is arbitrary. The second column of Table 2 specifies the relationship between inputs to the NTF and outputs that the NTF generates based on the inputs provided to the NTF. The inputs to each NTF include a previous waveform state denoted wp and a previous M-function state, denoted mp. The output of each NTF is a set of possible next waveform states, denoted WN. Each NTF specifies one value of a G-function that equals 0 or 1, as noted in the third column of Table 2. Columns four through eight of Table 2 include one or more adjacency restrictions. The adjacency restrictions specify that if an NTF appears at time t-1, then certain NTFs are prohibited at time t, based on the NTF that appeared at time t-1. For example, NTF FF is prohibited at time t if the NTF at time t-1 had been either F0 or FL. Additionally, each NTF is associated with a waveform set diagram symbol, shown in columns four through eight of

Table 2, that can appear at time t given an NTF at time t-1. For example, the NTF F0, shown in row 1 of Table 2, exhibits the waveform set diagram symbol depicted in column 6 at time t if the NTF preceding F0 at time t-1 was FG. However, if the NTF preceding F0 at time t-1 was FF, FR, FS, or FX, then the waveform set diagram symbol of F0 is as depicted in column 8 of Table 2. A waveform set diagram symbol illustrates the set of possible waveform states at time t, including whether such states can differ from the states at time t-1, indicated by a vertical line, which represents a transition or possible transition at time t. These NTFs are combined in sequences to form compact multi-waveform representations that comply with the above defined adjacency restrictions. When propagating compact multi-waveform representations throughout a design, the compact multi-waveform representations are decomposed into the NTFs in order to apply the appropriate NTF operators upon the constituent NTFs.

Table 3 identifies the NTF operators.

TABLE 3

NTF Operators													
Function Name	Prototype (Call Syntax)	Definition (Lookup Table)										Description	
ntf_not	ntf_y = ntf_not (ntf_a)	ntf_a:	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	Used to determine the set of waveforms produced by an inverter.
		ntf_y:	F1	F0	FR	FG	FL	FH	FN	FF	FS	FX	
		input	input ntf_b										
		ntf_a	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
ntf_and	ntf_y = ntf_and (ntf_a, ntf_b)	F0	F0	F0	F0	F0	F0	FL	F0	F0	F0	F0	Used to determine the set of waveforms produced by an AND gate.
		F1	F0	F1	FX	FX	F1	FL	FN	FR	FR	FX	
		FF	F0	FX	FF	FX	FF	FL	FF	FX	FF	FX	
		FG	F0	FX	FX	FX	FG	FL	FG	FX	FG	FX	
		FH	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	
		FN	F0	FN	FF	FG	FN	FL	FN	FR	FN	FX	
		FR	F0	FR	FX	FX	FR	FL	FR	FR	FR	FX	
		FS	F0	FR	FF	FG	FS	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FX	F0	FX	FX	FX	FX	FL	FX	FX	FX	FX	
		input	input ntf_b										
		ntf_a	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
ntf_xor	ntf_y = ntf_xor (ntf_a, ntf_b)	F0	F0	F1	FX	FX	F1	F0	F0	FX	FX	FX	Used to determine the set of waveforms produced by an XOR (exclusive-OR) gate.
		F1	F1	F0	FX	FX	F0	F1	F1	FX	FX	FX	
		FF	FX	FX	FX	FX	FR	FF	FF	FX	FX	FX	
		FG	FX	FX	FX	FX	FG	FG	FG	FX	FG	FX	
		FH	F1	F0	FR	FG	FL	FH	FN	FF	FS	FX	
		FL	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FN	F0	F1	FF	FG	FN	FN	FN	FR	FN	FX	
		FR	FX	FX	FX	FX	FF	FR	FR	FX	FX	FX	
		FS	FX	FX	FX	FG	FS	FS	FN	FX	FS	FX	
		FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	
		input	input ntf_d										
		ntf_c	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
ntf_trans_latch	ntf_q = ntf_trans_latch (ntf_c, ntf_d)	F0	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	Used to determine the set of waveforms produced by a zero-delay transparent latch.
		F1	F0	F1	FX	FX	F1	F0	FN	FX	FX	FX	
		FF	FF	FR	FF	FG	FS	FS	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FG	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FN	FX	FX	FX	
		FH	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FL	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	
		FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	
		FR	FF	FR	FX	FX	FR	FF	FN	FX	FX	FX	
		FS	FF	FR	FF	FG	FS	FS	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FN	FX	FX	FX	
		input	input ntf_d										
		ntf_c	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
ntf_trans_latch_const	ntf_q = ntf_trans_latch_const (ntf_c, ntf_d)	F0	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	Used to determine the set of waveforms produced by a zero-delay transparent latch, assuming that its data input is constant, na means the given ceil of the table should never be accessed.
		F1	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	
		FF	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	
		FG	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	
		FH	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	
		FL	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	
		FN	na	na	na	na	FN	FN	na	na	FN	na	
		FR	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	
		FS	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na	
FX	na	na	na	na	FH	FL	na	na	FS	na			

TABLE 3-continued

NTF Operators													
Function Name	Prototype (Call Syntax)	Definition (Lookup Table)										Description	
		input	input ntf_r										
		ntf_a	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
ntf_unit_delay_range	ntf_y = ntf_unit_delay_range (ntf_a, ntf_r)	F0	F0	FR	FX	FX	FR	F0	FL	FR	FR	FX	Assume ntf_r is the NTF for a range of time (t1 through t2), except that if ntf_r = F0, the range is assumed to contain F0 followed by FL; and likewise. F1 means F1 followed by FH. Assume ntf_a is the NTF for time t1-1. This function returns a new NTF to represent the same time range following a unit delay (i.e., output of unit delay block (UDB)). na means the given cell of the table should never be accessed.
		F1	FF	F1	FF	FX	F1	FF	FH	FX	FF	FX	
		FF	FF	FX	FF	FX	FX	FF	FF	FX	FF	FX	
		FG	FX	FX	FX	FG	FX	FX	FG	FX	FG	FX	
		FH	FF	FH	FF	FG	FH	FF	FH	FX	FF	FX	
		FL	FL	FR	FX	FG	FR	FL	FL	FR	FR	FX	
		FN	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FR	FX	FR	EX	FX	FR	EX	FR	FR	FR	FX	
		FS	FF	FR	FF	FG	na	na	FS	FR	FS	FX	
		FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	FX	
		input	input ntf_b										
		ntf_a	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
ntf_is_subset	bool_y = ntf_is_subset (ntf_a, ntf_b)	F0	T	F	T	F	F	F	F	F	F	T	Used to determine if one set of waveforms is a subset of another set of waveforms.
		F1	F	T	F	F	F	F	F	T	F	T	
		FF	F	F	T	F	F	F	F	F	F	T	
		FG	F	F	F	T	F	F	F	F	F	T	
		FH	F	T	T	T	T	F	F	T	T	T	
		FL	T	F	T	T	F	T	F	T	T	T	
		FN	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	
		FR	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	T	F	T	
		FS	F	F	T	T	F	F	F	T	T	T	
		FX	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	T	
		input	input ntf_b										
		ntf_a	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FS	FX	
ntf_fix_adjacent	ntf_y = ntf_fix_adjacent (ntf_a, ntf_b)	F0	FL	F1	na	FG	na	FL	FN	FR	FL	FR	Returns equivalent but valid value for ntf_b when it follows ntf_a in time. na means the given cell of the table should never be accessed.
		F1	F0	FH	FF	FG	FH	na	FN	na	FH	FF	
		FF	F0	F1	FF	FG	na	na	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FG	F0	F1	FF	FG	na	na	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FH	F0	FH	FF	FG	FH	na	FN	na	FH	FF	
		FL	FL	F1	na	FG	na	FL	FN	FR	FL	FR	
		FN	F0	F1	FF	FG	FH	FL	FN	FR	FN	FX	
		FR	F0	F1	FF	FG	na	na	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FS	F0	F1	FF	FG	na	na	FN	FR	FS	FX	
		FX	F0	F1	FF	FG	na	na	FN	FR	FS	FX	

The NTF operators correspond to operations of circuit components (e.g., ntf_and) and some operations employed for coherency (e.g., ntf_fix_adjacent and ntf_is_subset). The operations can be implemented with look ups because the look up tables are constructed based on the signal behavior represented by the NTFs and the foundational functions that capture transitional behavior. Table 3 identifies eight NTF operators. The ntf_not operator determines the NTF produced at the output of an inverter based on the NTF provided to the input of an inverter. The ntf_and operation determines the NTF produced at the output of an AND gate, given NTFs provided at the inputs of an AND gate. The ntf_xor operator determines the NTF produced at the output of a XOR gate given NTFs provided at the inputs of a XOR gate. The ntf_trans_latch operator determines the NTF at the output of a zero-delay transparent latch based on the NTFs provided at the inputs of a zero-delay transparent latch. The ntf_trans_latch_const operator determines the NTF at the output of a zero delay transparent latch given a first NTF that corresponds to a constant data input to the zero-delay transparent latch and a second NTF input that corresponds to the clock input to the zero-delay transparent latch. The ntf_unit_de-

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lay_range operator determines the NTF output of a unit delay component based on NTF inputs to the unit delay component. The ntf_is_subset operator determines whether a first NTF is a subset of a second NTF, returning a value of true if a first NTF is a subset of a second NTF. The ntf_fix_adjacent operator returns an equivalent but valid value for a second NTF when the second NTF follows a first NTF in time. Thus, the ntf_fix_adjacent operator ensures that the adjacency restrictions associated with NTFs are observed. Column four of Table 3 includes descriptions similar to the foregoing. Column two of Table 3 indicates example syntax that can be employed to call the corresponding operator named in column one of Table 3. Table 3 employs the syntax ntf_output=ntf_operator (ntf input1, ntf input2) for a dual input operator and ntf_output=ntf_operator (ntf input) for a single input. Column three of Table 3 indicates the look up tables associated with each of the NTF operators of column one of Table 3. The look up tables of column three of Table 3 indicate the NTF output generated based on the NTF input provided to each NTF operator listed in column one of Table 3.

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FIGS. 4A-4B depict example NTF sequences and the information encoded in the sequences. In this description, a sequence of NTFs is referred to as a clocked waveform set specification (CWSS). FIG. 4A depicts a sequence of NTFs relative to a virtual clock 404A. A virtual clock is a clock signal generated by a source that might be external to the circuit design being evaluated. Three timing parameters define any virtual clock: tP, denoting the period of a clock, which is the time interval from any rising edge to the next; tD, denoting the duty cycle of the clock, which is the time interval from any rising edge to the next falling edge; and tO, denoting the offset of the clock, which is the earliest non-negative time at which the clock rises. Each CWSS consists of eight NTFs. Each NTF is associated with a numerical value, ranging from 0 to 7, referred to as a CWSS slot. The CWSS slot identifies one NTF within a CWSS. Each slot is associated with certain times within a WSF. Table 4 indicates how the timing parameters of a virtual clock correlate to the constituent NTFs of a CWSS.

TABLE 4

Virtual Clock Information			
Slot	Relation to corresponding virtual clock	Times (in terms of virtual clock parameters tP, tD, tO)	value of wsf(t)
0	just before rising edge	All times t such that $((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) = tP - 1$	$wsf(t) = ntf0$
1	at time of rising edge	All times t such that $((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) = 0$	$wsf(t) = ntf1$

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TABLE 4-continued

Virtual Clock Information			
Slot	Relation to corresponding virtual clock	Times (in terms of virtual clock parameters tP, tD, tO)	value of wsf(t)
2	just after rising edge	All times t such that $((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) = 1$	$wsf(t) = ntf2$
3	between rising and falling edges	All times t such that $1 < ((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) < tD - 1$	$wsf(t) = ntf3$
4	just before falling edge	All times t such that $((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) = tD - 1$	$wsf(t) = ntf4$
5	at time of falling edge	All times t such that $((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) = tD$	$wsf(t) = ntf5$
6	just after falling edge	All times t such that $((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) = tD + 1$	$wsf(t) = ntf6$
7	between falling and rising edges	All times t such that $tD + 1 < ((t - tO) \text{ modulo } tP) < tP - 1$	$wsf(t) = ntf7$

In particular, Table 4 relates each CWSS slot, shown in the first column, to a set of times related to virtual clock timing parameters indicated in the third column, which, in turn, relate to NTFs and WSFs indicated in the fourth column. FIG. 4B depicts a diagram of a set of waveforms 416C, which can be expressed as a CWSS 404C, consisting of CWSS slots 408C, each CWSS slot 408C corresponding to an NTF 412C. In FIG. 4B, the notation tR refers to the time of a rising edge of a virtual clock associated with a CWSS, which also corresponds to slot 1 of the CWSS in this depiction. The notation tF refers to the time of a falling edge of the same virtual clock, which also corresponds to slot five of this CWSS.

The CWSS construct has operators that are abstractions of the NTF operators. Table 5 identifies the CWSS operators.

TABLE 5

CWSS Operators			
Function Name	Prototype (Call Syntax)	Definition (Implementation)	Description
cwss_not	cwss_y = cwss_not(cwss_a)	for each slot 1, $cwss_y[1] = ntf_not(cwss_a[1])$	Calculates the CWSS produced by an inverter
cwss_and	cwss_y = cwss_and(cwss_a, cwss_b)	See generic algorithm	Calculates the CWSS produced by an AND gate
cwss_xor	cwss_y = cwss_xor(cwss_a, cwss_b)	See generic algorithm	Calculates the CWSS produced by an XOR (exclusive-OR) gate
cwss_trans_latch	cwss_q = cwss_trans_latch(cwss_c, cwss_d)	See generic algorithm	Calculates the CWSS produced by a zero-delay transparent latch
cwss_trans_latch_const	cwss_q = cwss_trans_latch_const(cwss_c, cwss_d)	See generic algorithm	Calculates the CWSS produced by a zero-delay transparent latch assessing the data input is constant
cwss_fix_latch	cwss_y = cwss_fix_latch(cwss_a)	See separate algorithm	Replaces any occurrence of FX in slots 0-2 and 4-6 with FG if followed by FS and NOT precoded by FG This has no semantic effect, but allows the CWSS to subset-match CWSS's containing FG's (Can't replace in slots 3 and 7 since those represent time ranges.)
cwss_unit_delay	cwss_y = cwss_unit_delay(cwss_a)	$cwss_y = (cwss_a[0], cwss_a[0], cwss_a[1], ntf_unit_delay_range(cwss_a[2], cwss_a[3]), cwss_a[4], cwss_a[4]), cwss_a[5], ntf_unit_delay_range(cwss_a[6], cwss_a[7]))$	Calculates the CWSS produced by a unit delay block (UDB), assuming a "timed path" i.e. we assume the stability windows around the rising or falling edge, if any, are preserved. Notice that slots 0 and 4 retain their pre-delayed values. We assume that neither slots 0 nor 4 contain F0 or F1, otherwise we would need to fix possible adjacency violations.

TABLE 5-continued

CWSS Operators			
Function Name	Prototype (Call Syntax)	Definition (Implementation)	Description
cwss_path_delay	cwss_y = cwss_path_delay (type, cwss_a)	See separate algorithm	Calculates the CWSS produced by a path delay block (PDB), assuming a path which is timed to the leading or trailing edge of the virtual clock, as indicated by the type argument.
cwss_is_subset	bool_b = cwss_is_subset (cwss_a, cwss_b)	See separate algorithm	Determines if the set of waveforms specified by one CWSS is a subset of the set specified by another.

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The CWSS operators correspond to operations of circuit components (e.g., cwss_and) and some operations employed for coherency (e.g., cwss_is_subset). As can be seen by the implementation definition column, these operators rely on algorithms (referred to as “separate algorithm” and “generic algorithm”). These algorithms invoke the NTF operators for each NTF that constitutes a CWSS. These algorithms are discussed later. There are nine CWSS operators. These include cwss_not, cwss_and, cwss_xor, cwss_trans_latch, cwss_trans_latch_const, cwss_is_subset, and cwss_unit_delay, which correspond to the counterpart NTF operators but perform operations on CWSSs. The CWSS operator cwss_fix_latch corresponds to the NTF operator ntf_fix_adjacent, but for a particular use related to a transparent latch. The CWSS operator cwss_path_delay determines the CWSS generated by a path delay block. Column one of Table 5 lists the CWSS operators. Column two of Table 5 indicates

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example CWSS operator syntax. Column four of Table 5 describes the function of each CWSS operator. Column three of Table 5 refers to the algorithms that implement seven of the nine CWSS operators. In one embodiment, the cwss_not operator can be implemented in a for loop that iterates through each slot of the CWSS, invoking the ntf_not operator for each CWSS slot. Since the slots of a CWSS correspond to NTFs, the CWSS operators generally are implemented by calling NTF operators, manipulating each of the eight NTFs that comprise the CWSS. The cwss_unit_delay operator is implemented through the equation listed in row seven, column three of Table 5.

Table 6 identifies 55 phase types and relationships with CWSSs and phase type groups. Each phase type can be considered a construct (e.g., variable or notation) that represents a set of waveforms as a function of a non-specific virtual clock, as mentioned above.

TABLE 6

Phase Types					
Number	Symbol	Name	Waveform Set Diagram	CWSS	Group
1	<>	Null (ignore)		{FN, FN, FN, FN, FN, FN}	GN
2	0	Constant zero		{FL, FL, FL, FL, FL, FL}	G0
3	1	Constant one		{FH, FH, FH, FH, FH, FH}	G1
4	?	Unknown constant		{FS, FS, FS, FS, FS, FS}	GS
5	C	Clock		{FL, F1, FH, FH, FH, F0, FL, FL}	GCL
6	~C	Inverted Clock		{FH, F0, FL, FL, FL, F1, FH, FH}	GCT
7	C#1	Delayed Clock		{FL, FL, F1, FH, FH, FH, F0, FL}	GCL

TABLE 6-continued

Phase Types					
Number	Symbol	Name	Waveform Set Diagram	CWSS	Group
8	$\sim C\#1$	Delayed Inverted Clock		{FH, FH, F0, FL, FL, FL, F1, FH}	GCT
9	$C!1$	Pulsed Clock		{FL, F1, F0, FL, FL, FL, FL, FL}	GCL
10	$(\sim C)!1$	Pulsed Inverted Clock		{FL, FL, FL, F1, F0, FL}	GCT
11	$\sim C!1$	Inverted Pulsed Clock		{FH, F0, F1, FH, FH, FH, FH, FH}	GCI
12	$\sim(\sim C)!1$	Inverted Pulsed Inverted Clock		{FH, FH, FH, FH, FH, F0, F1, FH}	GCI
13	$C!E$	Edge Clock		{FL, F1, F0, FL, FL, F1, F0, FL}	GCE
14	$\sim C!E$	Inverted Edge Clock		{FH, F0, F1, FH, FH, FH, F0, F1, FH}	GCI
15	$C\%*$	Low-Gated Clock		{FL, FR, FS, FS, FS, F0, FL, FL}	GGL
16	$(\sim C)\%*$	Low-Gated Inverted Clock		{FS, F0, FL, FL, FL, FR, FS, FS}	GGT
17	$C\#1\%*$	Low-Gated Delayed Clock		{FL, FL, FR, FS, FS, FS, F0, FL}	GGL
18	$(\sim C)\#1\%*$	Low-Gated Delayed Inverted Clock		{FS, FS, F0, FL, FL, FL, FR, FS}	GGT
19	$C!1\%*$	Low-Gated Pulsed Clock		{FL, FR, F0, FL, FL, FL, FL, FL}	GGL
20	$(\sim C)!1\%*$	Low-Gated Pulsed Inverted Clock		{FL, FL, FL, FL, FL, FR, F0, FL}	GGT
21	$(\sim C!1)\%*$	Low-Gated Inverted Pulsed Clock		{FS, F0, FR, FS, FS, FS, FS, FS}	GGI
22	$(\sim(\sim C)!1)\%*$	Low-Gated Inverted Pulsed Clock		{FS, FS, FS, FS, FS, F0, FR, FS}	GGI

TABLE 6-continued

Phase Types					
Number	Symbol	Name	Waveform Set Diagram	CWSS	Group
23	C!E%*	Low-Gated Edge Clock		{FL, FR, F0, FL, FL, FR, F0, FL}	GGE
24	(~C!E)%*	Low-Gated Inverted Edge		{FS, F0, FR, FS, FS, F0, FR, FS}	GGI
25	C%^	High-Gated Clock		{FS, F1, FH, FH, FH, FF, FS, FS}	GCL
26	(~C)%^	High-Gated Inverted Clock		{FH, FF, FS, FS, FS, F1, FH, FH}	GCT
27	C#1%^	High-Gated Delayed Clock		{FS, FS, F1, FH, FH, FH, FF, FS}	GCL
28	(~C)#1%^	High-Gated Delayed Inverted		{FH, FH, FF, FS, FS, FS, F1, FH}	GCT
29	C!1%^	High-Gated Pulsed Clock		{FS, F1, FF, FS, FS, FS, FS, FS}	GCL
30	(~C)!1%^	High-Gated Pulsed Inverted		{FS, FS, FS, FS, FS, F1, FF, FS}	GCT
31	(~C!1)%^	High-Gated Inverted Pulsed		{FH, FF, F1, FH, FH, FH, FH, FH}	GCI
32	(~(~C)!1)%^	High-Gated Inverted Pulsed		{FH, FH, FH, FH, FH, FF, F1, FH}	GCI
33	C!E%^	High-Gated Edge Clock		{FS, F1, FF, FS, FS, F1, FF, FS}	GCE
34	(~C!E)%^	High-Gated Inverted Edge		{FH, FF, F1, FH, FH, FF, F1, FH}	GCI
35	C%?	Double-Gated Clock		{FS, FR, FS, FS, FS, FF, FS, FS}	GGL
36	(~C)%?	Double-Gated Inverted Clock		{FS, FF, FS, FS, FS, FR, FS, FS}	GGT
37	C#1%?	Double-Gated Delayed Clock		{FS, FS, FR, FS, FS, FS, FF, FS}	GGL

TABLE 6-continued

Phase Types					
Number	Symbol	Name	Waveform Set Diagram	CWSS	Group
38	(~C)#1%?	Double-Gated Delayed Inverted		{FS, FS, FF, FS, FS, FS, FR, FS}	GGT
39	C!1%?	Double-Gated Pulsed Clock		{FS, FR, FF, FS, FS, FS, FS, FS}	GGL
40	(~C)!1%?	Double-Gated Pulsed Inverted		{FS, FS, FS, FS, FS, FR, FF, FS}	GGT
41	(~C!1)%?	Double-Gated Inverted Pulsed		{FS, FF, FR, FS, FS, FS, FS, FS}	GGI
42	(~(~C)!1)%?	Double-Gated Inverted Pulsed		{FS, FS, FS, FS, FS, FF, FR, FS}	GGI
43	C!E%?	Double-Gated Edge Clock		{FS, FR, FF, FS, FS, FR, FF, FS}	GGE
44	(~C!E)%?	Double-Gated Inverted Edge		{FS, FF, FR, FS, FS, FF, FR, FS}	GGI
45	C@LPGF	Latched Leading Phase Glitch-		{FS, FS, FG, FG, FG, FG, FS, FS}	GLL
46	C@LGF	Latched Leading Glitch-Free		{FS, FS, FG, FG, FG, FG, FG, FG}	GLL
47	C@LP	Latched Leading Phase		{FS, FS, FX, FX, FX, FX, FS, FS}	GLL
48	C@L	Latched Leading		{FS, FS, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX}	GLL
49	C@TPGF	Latched Trailing Phase Glitch-		{FG, FG, FS, FS, FS, FS, FG, FG}	GLT
50	C@TGF	Latched Trailing Glitch-Free		{FG, FG, FG, FG, FS, FS, FG, FG}	GLT
51	C@TP	Latched Trailing Phase		{FX, FX, FS, FS, FS, FS, FX, FX}	GLT
52	C@T	Latched Trailing		{FX, FX, FX, FX, FS, FS, FX, FX}	GLT

TABLE 6-continued

Phase Types					
Number	Symbol	Name	Waveform Set Diagram	CWSS	Group
53	C@E	Latched by any Edge		{FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX}	GLE
54	*	All waveforms		{FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX}	GA
55	~	Unknown (default)		{FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX, FX}	GU

Column one of Table 6 is a number assigned to each phase type. The assigned numbers can be referred to as phase type order numbers. Selection of a phase type as a result of an operation that models a circuit component (e.g., an AND gate or inverter) conforms to this defined order of phase types. Algorithms discussed later will refer back to this ordering. Column two of Table 6 includes example symbols assigned to each phase type. Column three of Table 6 indicates names assigned to each phase type for ease of reference. Column four of Table 6 includes a waveform set diagram illustrating the set of waveforms designated by the phase type. The waveform set diagram is a function of a virtual clock, as indicated by the markers tR and tF in column four of Table 6, which designate the rising and falling times, respectively, of a virtual clock, and which may thus vary from one virtual clock to another. Accordingly, each phase type symbol corresponds to a waveform set diagram. Thus, operations performed on a phase type are operations performed on a set of waveforms, each depicted in column four of Table 6. Column five of Table 6 indicates a CWSS associated with each phase type. Each CWSS is comprised of eight NTFs, which collectively represent the waveform set diagram of column four of Table 6. Column six is a group name assigned to each phase type, referred to herein as phase type groups.

Table 7 identifies phase type groups (PTGS).

TABLE 7

Phase Type Groups		
Phase Type Group (PTG)	Member Phase Type(s)	Description
G0	0	Constant zero.
G1	1	Constant one.
GA	*	The set of all possible waveforms. Used whenever no other phase type can adequately and completely express the actual set produced by an operator. Could be used by a designer to specify that an input is completely nondeterministic.
GCE	C!E, C!E% [^]	Edge-pulsed ungated or high-gated clock. (Pulses on every edge--falling and rising--of the virtual clock.) The clock is guaranteed to be active (high) during both phases of every cycle. A latch clocked by such a clock and having a constant data input will have a constant output.

TABLE 7-continued

Phase Type Groups		
Phase Type Group (PTG)	Member Phase Type(s)	Description
GCI	~C!1, ~(~C)!1, ~C!E, (~C!1)% [^] , ~(~C)!1)% [^] , ~C!E)% [^]	Inverted pulsed ungated or high-gated clock. Can also be thought of as "invalid clock" because such a clock should not be directly attached to the clock input of a latch.
GCL	C, C#1, C!1, C% [^] , C#1)% [^] , C!1)% [^]	Leading-phase ungated or high-gated clock. The clock is guaranteed to be active (high) during the first (leading) half of the virtual clock's cycle. A latch clocked by such a clock and having a constant data input will have a constant output.
GCT	~C, ~C#1, (~C)!1, (~C)% [^] , (~C)#1)% [^] , (~C)!1)% [^]	Trailing-phase ungated or high-gated clock. The clock is guaranteed to be active (high) during the second (trailing) half of the virtual clock's cycle. A latch clocked by such a clock and having a constant data input will have a constant output.
GGE	C!E%*, C!E%?	Edge-pulsed low- or double-gated clock. (Pulses on every edge--falling and rising--of the virtual clock.) Clock may be low throughout any given phase of any given cycle. A latch clocked by such a clock and having a constant data input will not have a constant output (since it is unpredictable when the latch will sample the input).
GGI	(~C!1)%*, (~C)!1)%*, (~C!E)%*, (~C!1)%?, (~C)!1)%?%, (~C!E)%?	Inverted pulsed low- or double-gated clock. Can also be thought of as "invalid clock" because such a clock should not be directly attached to the clock input of a latch.
GGL	C%*, C#1)%*, C!1)%*, C%?, C#1)%?, C!1)%?	Leading-phase low- or double-gated clock. The clock may be active (high) during the first (leading) half of the virtual clock's cycle; or it may be low or high throughout the cycle. A latch clocked by such a clock and having a constant data input will not have a constant output (since it is unpredictable when the latch will sample the input).
GGT	(~C)%*, (~C)#1)%*, (~C)!1)%*, (~C)%?, (~C)#1)%?, (~C)!1)%?	Trailing-phase low- or double-gated clock. The clock may be active (high) during the second (trailing) half of the virtual clock's cycle; or it may be low or high throughout the cycle. A latch clocked by such a clock and having a constant data input will not have a constant output (since it is unpredictable when the latch will sample the input).
GLE	C@E	Driven by latch(es) clocked by edge-pulsed or both leading- and trailing-phase clocks.

TABLE 7-continued

Phase Type Groups		
Phase Type Group (PTG)	Member Phase Type(s)	Description
GLL	C@LPGF, C@LGF, C@LP, C@L	Driven by latch(es) clocked by leading-phase clocks.
GLT	C@TPGF, C@TGF, C@TP, C@T	Driven by latch(es) clocked by trailing-phase clocks.
GN	< >	Null phase type, representing an empty set of waveforms. Used to mean that a given signal should be ignored for the purposes of classifying downstream signals. This could be used as the default phase type for any circuit input which is not assigned a phase type by the designer.
GS	?	Stable (constant) signal: either constant zero or constant one (we don't know which).
GU	—	Unknown phase type. This is the default phase type assigned to all internal nets. It indicates those nets for which the propagation algorithm has not yet calculated a phase type. In general, this will not appear on any net after phase propagation has completed.

A phase type group represents one or more phase types. For example, the phase type group GCE represents a grouping of two phase types. Phase type groups can be used to differentiate among phase types that have the same CWSS. Phase types are assigned to a phase type group based on the intended use of the phase type. For instance, certain phase types are implemented to designate clock signals, while other phase types are implemented to designate data signals or constant value signals. Column one of Table 7 indicates example identifiers to designate each phase type group. Column two of Table 7 indicates the phase types that are members of each phase type group. Column three of Table 7 provides a description of each phase type group.

The combination of a phase type and a phase type group allows compact representation of multiple waveforms based on NTFs and the adjacency restrictions placed on the NTFs. In other words, phase types are representations of CWSSs and phase type groups allow for CWSSs to be overloaded. Tables 8 and 9 identify operators for phase types and phase type groups. These operators invoke the previously defined CWSS and NTF operators.

TABLE 8

Phase Type Operators			
Function Name	Prototype (Call Syntax)	Definition (Implementation)	Description
pt_not	pt_y = pt_not (pt_a)	pt_y = first_matching_pt (cwss_not (pt_to_cwss(pt_a)), ptg_not (pt_to_ptg(pt_a)))	Calculates the phase type produced by an inverter.
pt_and	pt_y = pt_and (pt_a, pt_b)	pt_y = first_matching_pt (cwss_and (pt_to_cwss(pt_a), pt_to_cwss(pt_b)), ptg_and (pt_to_ptg(pt_a), pt_to_ptg(pt_b)))	Calculates the phase type produced by an AND gate.
pt_xor	pt_y = pt_xor (pt_a, pt_b)	pt_y = first_matching_pt (cwss_xor (pt_to_cwss(pt_a), pt_to_cwss(pt_b))), ptg_xor (pt_to_ptg(pt_a), pt_to_ptg(pt_b)))	Calculates the phase type produced by an XOR (exclusive-OR) gate. This algorithm produces a more specific result than decomposing XOR into ANDs and inverters.
pt_latch	pt_y = pt_latch (pt_c, pt_d)	if (pt_to_ptg(pt_d) is G0, G1, or GS) { // data is constant Let cwss_predelay = cwss_trans_latch_const (pt_to_cwss(pt_c), pt_to_cwss(pt_d)) } else { Let cwss_predelay = cwss_trans_latch (pt_to_cwss(pt_c), pt_to_cwss(pt_d)) } pt_y = first_matching_pt (cwss_unit_delay (cwss_fix_latch (cwss_predelay)), ptg_latch(pt_to_ptg(pt_c), pt_to_ptg(pt_d)))	Calculates the phase type produced by a latch. Note that the latch circuit primitive has a delay of one time unit. We could optionally model a zero-delay latch by omitting the call to cwss_unit_delay.
pt_flipflop	pt_y = pt_flipflop (pt_c, pt_d)	pt_y = pt_latch (pt_c, pt_latch (pt_not (pt_c), pt_d))	Calculates the phase type produced by a flip-flop. Leverages the fact that a flip-flop can be implemented by two transparent latches with opposite-phase clocks.
pt_unit_delay	pt_y = pt_unit_delay (pt_a)	pt_y = first_matching_pt (cwss_unit_delay (pt_to_cwss(pt_a)), ptg_unit_delay (pt_to_ptg(pt_a)))	Calculates the phase type produced by a unit delay block (UDB).
pt_path_delay	pt_y = pt_path_delay (pt_a)	if (pt_to_ptg(pt_a) is GLL) { pt_y = first_matching_pt (cwss_path_delay (leading, pt_to_cwss(pt_a)), GLL); } else if (pt_to_ptg(pt_a) is GLT) { pt_y = first_matching_pt (cwss_path_delay (trailing, pt_to_cwss(pt_a)), GLT); } else { pt_y = pt_a; }	Calculates the phase type produced by a path delay block (PDB).

the phase type operators. The example phase type operator syntax is as follows: `pt_y=pt_operator (pt_input)` for a single input phase type operator and `pt_y=pt_operator (pt_input1, pt_input2)` for a dual input phase type operator. Column three of Table 8 includes example pseudocode for implementing the phase type operators. Each of the phase type operators calls a function identified as `first_matching_pt` function, which relies upon the ordering of phase types in Table 6. The phase type operators listed in Table 8 each are comprised of a call to a corresponding CWSS operator and a phase type group operator. For instance, the `pt_xor` operator calls the `first_matching_pt` function. The arguments to the `first_matching_pt` function include the CWSS operator `cwss_xor` and the phase type group operator `ptg_xor`. The arguments to the `cwss_xor` operator include the `pt_to_cwss` function, called for each phase type input. The `pt_to_cwss` function converts a phase type to a CWSS. The arguments to the `ptg_xor` operator include the `pt_to_ptg` function, called for each phase type input. The `pt_to_ptg` function converts a phase type to a phase type group. These conversions are based on the relationships identified in Table 6, which can be encoded in accordance with various data structures. Each phase type is associated with a CWSS and a phase type group. Each CWSS is comprised of NTFs. Each NTF is based upon a WSF, which, in turn, represents a multiple waveforms.

Table 9 identifies phase type group operators.

Phase Type Group Operators

[illegible]

Phase Type Group Operators

		Phase Type Group Operators																
Prototype																		
Function (Call	Syntax)	Definition (Lookup Table)																
Name																		
		GGL	GGL GXC GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GGL GXC GU														
		GGT	GGT GXC GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GGT GXC GU														
		GLE	GLE GLE GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GU														
		LLL	LLL GLL GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GLL GLE GLL GLL GU														
		GLT	GLT GLT GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GLE GLE GLT GLT GLT GU														
		GN	GN GN GA	GCE GCI GCL GCT GGE GGI GGL GGT GLE GLL GLT GN														
		GS	GS GS GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GLE GLL GLT GN														
		GU	GU GU GU	GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU														
ptg_	ptg_g =	input	input ptg_d															
latch	ptg_c latch (ptg_c, ptg_d)	ptg_c	G0 G1 GA	GCE GCE GCL GCT GGE GGI GGL GGT GLE GLL GLT GN	GS	GU												
		G0	GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS GS															
		G1	G0 G1 GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GLE GLL GLT GN	GS	GU												
		GA	GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA	GU														
		GCE	G0 G1	GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE	GLE													
		GCI	G0 G1	GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA	GS	GU												
		GGL	G0 G1	GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL	GXL													
		GCT	G0 G1	GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT	GS	GXT												
		GGE		GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE GLE	GLE													
		GGI	GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA	GA	GA													
		GGL		GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL GXL	GXL													
		GGT		GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT GXT	GXT													
		GLE	GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA	GN	GA	GN	GA											
		LLL	GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GN	GA	GN													
		GLT	GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GN	GA	GN													
		GN	GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN GN	GN	GN													
		GS	GS GS GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GA GLE GLL GLT GN	GS	GU													
		GU	GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU GU	GU	GU													
ptg_unit_delay	ptg_y = ptg_unit_ delay (ptg_a)	ptg_a:	G0 G1 GA	GCE GCI GCL GCT GGE GGI GGL GGT GLE GLL GLT GN	GS	GU												
		ptg_y:	G0 G1 GA	GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GXC GLE GLL GLT GN	GS	GU												

Table 9 identifies five phase type group operators by example function names in column 1: `ptg_not`, `ptg_and`, `ptg_xor`, `ptg_latch`, and `ptg_unit_delay`. These phase type group operators correspond to the inverter, AND gate, XOR gate, transparent latch, and unit delay circuit components. Column two of Table 9 indicates an example syntax that may be used for the phase type group operators. The phase type group operator syntax depicted in column two of Table 9 generally follows the other syntaxes described herein. For a single input phase type group operator, the syntax is `ptg_y=ptg_operator (ptg_input)`. For a dual input phase type group operator, the syntax is `ptg_y=ptg_operator (ptg_input1, ptg_input2)`. Column three of Table 9 is a table that specifies the resulting phase type group output given a set of phase type group inputs. These tables are similar to those specified in Table 3 for the NTF operators.

The phase type group operators identified in Table 9 indicate possible output referred to herein as meta-phase type groups (meta-PTGs). A meta-phase type group is a grouping of phase type groups. The phase type group operators in Table 9 provide for the possibility of three (3) meta-PTGs. These are denoted herein as GXC, GXL, and GXT. Table 10 identifies the phase type group members of each meta-PTG. Meta phase type groups are implemented to specify results of phase type group operations that conform to the rules specified herein. Phase type groups allow for the compact representations of multiple waveforms because the group identifiers can be used to disambiguate a sequence of non-deterministic signal transition representations that map to different phase types.

TABLE 10

Meta-Phase Type Groups	
META PHASE TYPE GROUPS	PHASE TYPE GROUPS
GXC	G0, G1, GA, GCE, GCI, GCL, GCT, GGE, GGI, GGL, GGT
GXL	GA, GLL
GXT	GA, GLT

FIG. 5 is a conceptual diagram that depicts an example hierarchy of relationships among data constructs. Depending on the programming language and particular literature, a data construct can be referred to as a class, an object, a structure, etc. This example data construct **500** includes several elements or members that define the structure of the class and behavior of the class. The structure of this data construct **500** is defined by the following members: NTFs **508**, CWSSs **516**, phase type groups **520**, meta phase type groups **524**, phase tags **532**, phase types **536**, mode expressions **540**, mode independent phase expressions (MIPEs) **544**, phase expressions **548**, reduced orthogonal list of conditional MIPE pairs (ROLCMPs) **552**, and phase ids **556**. The behavior of the data construct **500** is defined by functions or operators that operate on the depicted members: NTF operators **560**, CWSS operators **564**, phase type group operators **568**, phase tag operators **572**, phase type operators **576**, mode operators **580**, MIPE operators **584**, phase expression operators **588**, and phase id operators **592**. Subsequent figures provide additional detail regarding each illustrated member and operator.

FIG. 5 depicts a waveform set function (WSF) 504 as supporting the NTF data construct 508. The WSF 504 is

depicted with a dashed line because the WSF **504** may not be explicitly defined in a data construct. An NTF data construct can be defined in a class, for example, based on assumptions that rely upon a WSF without explicitly indicating the mappings from each unit of time to an NTF. But the NTF data construct **508** would express the definitions indicated in Table 2.

A CWSS **516** is a sequence of NTFs **508**. Together with a virtual clock **512**, a CWSS **516** defines sets of waveforms **528**. The virtual clock **512** is also depicted with a dashed line because this may not be explicitly defined in a data construct. The information for a virtual clock (e.g., timing parameters) can be assumed or implied by the CWSS data construct **516**. The NTF operators **560** manipulate each NTF **508** that comprises an instance of a CWSS **516**, thereby manipulating the CWSS **516** instance.

A user applies phase tags **532** or phase expressions **548** to the primary inputs and the outputs of clock generators in a circuit design. Operations are performed on these phase tags **532** or phase expressions **548**. When the operations are performed, the phase tags **532** or phase expressions **548** are propagated throughout a design, and the resulting phase tags **532** or phase expressions **548** can be analyzed to identify possible design defects or particular design characteristics. A phase tag **532** or phase expression **548** is propagated throughout the circuit design by transforming input phase tags or input phase expressions received at primary inputs and outputs of clock generators in a circuit design through the previously discussed look up tables so that each output net of the circuit design includes a phase tag **532** or phase expression **548**.

A phase type **536** is a generalized version of a phase tag **532**. While a phase tag **532** can be associated with a particular virtual clock **512**, a phase type **536** is a generalized expression representing a set of waveforms **528**. As with the other variable types, a phase type **536** can be manipulated through phase type operators **576**. A phase type **536** is associated with a clocked waveform set specification (CWSS) **516** and a phase type group **520**.

As previously mentioned, multiple phase types **536** can be associated with the same CWSS **516**. A phase type group **520** distinguishes such phase types **536**, and can distinguish characteristics of signals represented by phase types **536**, such as clock signals as compared to data signals. Certain phase type groups **520** can be constituent elements of a meta phase type group **524**. Phase type groups **520** and meta phase type groups **524** can be manipulated through phase type group operators **568**.

Phase tags **532** and phase expressions **548** themselves are comprised of lower level data constructs (e.g., CWSSs) and also can be converted into different data constructs on which operations are executed. A phase expression **548** is comprised of zero or more mode expressions **540** and one or more MIPES **544**.

A mode expression **540** represents a condition in which a design can operate among multiple modes. A mode is a selection between a first signal and a second signal that is different from the first signal. For example, a design might include a dual input multiplexer. A first input to the multiplexer might be a first clock signal and a second input to the multiplexer might be a second clock signal that is asynchronous to the first clock signal. The multiplexer can receive a selector signal that causes it to select between the first signal and the second signal. In this example, the design includes more than one mode, which can be represented via a mode expression **540**. Operations can be performed on the mode expressions **540** through the mode operators **580**.

A MIPE **540** is comprised of one or more phase tags **532**. A MIPE **540** represents a set of waveforms **528** that is a function of the set of waveforms **528** represented by the constituent phase tags **532** of the MIPE **544**. Operations can be performed on a MIPE **544** through the MIPE operators **584**.

A phase expression **548** can be converted into a reduced orthogonal list of conditional MIPE pairs **552**, designated as a ROLCMP **552**. A ROLCMP **552** is a data construct that enables phase expressions **556** to be converted into phase ids **556**. A phase id **556** is a numerical handle associated with phase expressions **548**, enabling phase expressions **548** to be more easily manipulated. Subsequent sections of this specification describe converting a phase expression **548** into a ROLCMP **552**, and converting a ROLCMP **552** into phase ids **556**.

A phase tag **532** represents a set of waveforms **528** via CWSSs. In some cases, a phase tag **532** can be associated with a virtual clock **512**. Syntactically, if a phase tag **532** is associated with a virtual clock **512**, the phase tag will follow a syntax which includes the name of the virtual clock **512**. One such syntax can be represented as "Clock Name@Type of Clock Signal." For example, the phase tag **532** "A@L" designates the waveform set **528** associated with a latch clocked by the leading phase of virtual clock "A." However, in other cases, a phase tag **532** may not be associated with a virtual clock **512**. For instance, the phase tag "*" designates the set of all possible waveforms **528**. Phase tags **532** can be manipulated via phase tag operators **572**. Phase tag operators **572** implement operations on phase tags **532**. A phase tag **532** can be employed to distinguish among a type of signal, such as whether a signal is a clock signal, a data signal (e.g., latch driven signal), or a constant; a type of clock, such as a level, pulse, or delayed clock and inverted versions of each; and a phase of data, such as leading, trailing, or a combination.

As mentioned earlier, a phase type **536** is a generalized expression representing a set of waveforms **528**. For example, a phase tag **532** such as "A@L" can be generalized to the phase type "C@L," which represents a set of waveforms **528** associated with a leading-phase-clock latch clocked by any clock C. In some instances, a phase tag **532** conflates with the concept of a phase type **536**.

As discussed above, more than one phase type **536** can be represented by identical CWSSs **516**. Phase type groups **520** can distinguish phase types **536** that are represented by identical CWSSs **516**. Phase type groups **520** can also be implemented to distinguish among classes of signals, such as clock signals, data signals, and combinations of clock and data signals.

Phase expressions **548** can be comprised of mode expressions **540** and MIPES **544**. A mode expression **540** is a Boolean function with a mode as its argument. As discussed above, a mode is a Boolean function of the value of a signal in a design. For instance, if a design includes a dual input multiplexer, wherein a first input is a first clock signal and a second input is a second clock signal and a selector signal to the multiplexer causes the multiplexer to select the first or the second clock signal, then a mode expression **540** can represent the conditionality of the multiplexer's output—i.e.—that it is either the first clock signal or the second clock signal depending on the selector signal received at the multiplexer. Syntactically, a mode expression **540** can be specified in Backus-Naur form:

```

<mode_expression> ::= <mode_and_expression> |
<mode_expression> "!"
<mode_and_expression>
65 <mode_and_expression> ::= <mode_prefix_expression> |

```

-continued

```

<mode_and_expression> "&" <mode_prefix_expression>
<mode_prefix_expression> ::= <mode_primary_expression> | "~"
<mode_prefix_expression>
<mode_primary_expression> ::= <mode> | "0" | "1" |
("mode_expression").

```

The mode operators **580** comprise the logical functions NOT, AND, OR, and XOR that can take mode expressions **540** as inputs to generate an output mode expression **540** that has been manipulated via operation of one of the logical functions.

A MIPE **544** is a string that is comprised of a single phase tag **532** or multiple phase tags **532**. In particular, a multiple phase tag **532** MIPE **544** is an expression in which two or more phase tags **532** are joined by a transition-union operator, denoted with the ^ symbol. A MIPE **544** represents a set of waveforms **528** that is a function of the set of waveforms **528** represented by the constituent phase tags **532**. Specifically, a MIPE **544** represents the set of all waveforms **528** that have transitions only at times coincident with the times of transitions of waveforms in the sets of waveforms **528** represented by the constituent phase tags **532**. Syntactically, a MIPE **544** can be expressed in Backus-Naur form:

```

<mode_independent_phase_expression> ::= <phase_tag> |
<mode_independent_phase_expression> ^ <phase_tag>.

```

For example, the MIPE "A@L^B@L" means the set of waveforms that can transition from the leading edge of either clock A or clock B. The MIPE operators **584** allow operations to be performed on MIPES **544**.

Phase expressions **548** model the behavior of designs in which at least one circuit component receives a first clock signal and a second clock signal, wherein the first clock signal is asynchronous to the second clock signal. Additionally, phase expressions **548** model the behavior of designs in which at least one circuit component is capable of selecting a first signal or a second signal.

Syntactically, a phase expression **548** can be expressed in Backus-Naur form as follows:

```

<phase_expression> ::= <mode_independent_phase_expression> |
<conditional_phase_expression>
<conditional_phase_expression> ::= <mode_expression> ">"
<mode_independent_phase_expression> ">" <phase_expression>.

```

The relationship between a phase expression **548** and the set of waveforms **528** that the phase expression **548** represents is best understood through an example. Consider the example phase expression **548** $pe_3 = m \rightarrow pe_1 : pe_2$, where m is a mode expression **540**, pe_1 is a MIPE **544**, and pe_2 is a phase expression **548**. The set of waveforms that phase expression pe_3 specifies is the set of waveforms w_3 such that, for some w_1 waveform in pe_1 and some w_2 waveform in pe_2 , $w_3(t) = w_1(t)$ if m is true at time t ; otherwise, $w_3(t) = w_2(t)$. Two phase expressions **548** are equal if the waveform set **528** that each phase expression **548** specifies is the same. In some instances, a phase expression **548** might be optimally expressed in reduced orthogonal form. For example, the phase expression **548** $pe = m_1 \rightarrow p_1 : m_2 \rightarrow p_2 : \dots : p_k$ is in a reduced orthogonal form if four conditions are met: the m_i mode expressions **540** are pairwise orthogonal, meaning that $m_i \& m_j = 0$ whenever i does not equal j ; none of the m_i

mode expressions **540** are constant false Boolean functions, meaning that there does not exist an m_i that equals 0; the mode expression **540** defined by $m_k = \sim m_1 \& \sim m_2 \& \dots \& \sim m_{\{k-1\}}$ is not the constant false Boolean function, meaning that m_k does not equal 0; and the p_i MIPES **544** are different from each other.

The phase expression operators **588** implement mathematical operations (i.e. logical operations) on phase expressions **548**. For example, the phase expression operators **388** can be used to find the logical AND of a first phase expression **548** and a second phase expression **348**. In general, phase expression operators **588** perform operations on phase expressions **548**.

Two data types can be deployed to increase computational efficiency in performing calculations with phase expressions **548**. One such data type is the phase id **556**. A second such data type is the reduced orthogonal list of condition-MIPE pairs (ROLCMP) **552**. A phase id **556** is a unique non-negative integer handle associated with a phase expression **548**. Phase expressions **548** that are equivalent to one another can be assigned to the same phase id **556**. In one embodiment, phase expressions **548** are sequentially assigned to phase ids **556** as the phase expressions **548** are encountered. The ROLCMP **552** data type can be implemented to convert phase expressions **548** to phase ids **556** and vice versa. For example, a `rolcmp_to_id` data structure can map the canonical ROLCMP form of each phase expression **548** to the phase id **556** assigned to it, and a sequential container `id_to_rolcmp` can store the canonical ROLCMP **552** data structure for each previously encountered phase expression **348**, indexed by phase id **556**. Operations can be performed on phase ids **556** through phase id operators **592**.

The following flowcharts and pseudocode provide example operation of a phase algebra based design tool that operates with compact multi-waveform representations. These example operations will refer back to the operators and data constructs introduced in the earlier tables.

FIG. 6 is a flowchart of example operations for initializing an RTL circuit design representation of phase algebra based evaluation and propagation of compact multi-waveform representations throughout the design representation. At block **604**, a representation of multiple waveforms is received at each primary input and at the output of each clock generator of an RTL circuit design representation. For instance, a phase tag or phase expression is associated with a primary input of an RTL circuit design representation. At block **608**, the RTL circuit design representation is initialized to prepare the RTL circuit design representation to accept propagated multi-waveform representations. The initialization marks nets for propagation operations. At block **612**, the multi-waveform representations are determined for each of the nets in the RTL circuit design resulting from the received multi-waveform representation. For example, operators are applied to determine output phase tags based on the various circuit components modeled in the RTL circuit design representation. At block **616**, the determined multi-waveform representations are supplied for evaluation of the RTL circuit design.

FIG. 7 illustrates terminology associated with the example propagation algorithm and pseudocode to be described. A flip-flop **708** and path delay block (PDB) **716** are referred to as boxes. The connectors **704**, **712** represent nets. The boxes **708**, **716** can also be referred to as nodes. The connector **704** is the input net to flip flop **708**, and the connector **712** ("netA") is both the output net from the flip flop **708** and the input net to the PDB **708**. The propagation algorithm determines an output phase id, which will appear at netA **712**. PDB **716** can be referred to as the sink box of netA **712**. In one embodiment,

a source set and an update set can be established. The source set and update set can be data structures that store information about the status of each box in a circuit design representation. For example, the source set might include boxes associated with input multi-waveform representations but that lack output multi-waveform representations. The update set can include boxes that are associated with both input multi-waveform representations and output multi-waveform representations.

FIG. 8 is a flowchart of example operations for initializing a circuit design representation for phase algebra based evaluation. At block 804, a loop of operations begins for each net in an RTL circuit design representation. The operations in the loop are represented by blocks 808, 812, 816, 820, and 824. Block 828 is check for a termination condition for the loop. At block 808, it is determined whether a multi-waveform representation is already assigned to the net. If a multi-waveform representation is not already assigned to the net, the flow proceeds to block 812. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 824. At block 812, it is determined whether the net represents a circuit input or a clock generator output. If the net represents a circuit input or clock generator output, then the flow proceeds to block 816. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 820. At block 816, a null indication is assigned to the net, and the flow proceeds to block 824. At block 824, each sink node associated with the net is added to a set of sink nodes to be processed. At block 820, an unknown indication is assigned to the net. The flow proceeds to block 828. At block 828, it is determined whether there exist any additional nets in the circuit design representation. If additional nets exist in the circuit design representation, then the flow returns to block 804. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 832. At block 832, an indication that initialization is complete is generated.

The example initialization and propagation operations discussed below refer to three example data objects: 1) source_set, 2) update_set, and 3) phase_expr_conflicts. The source_set can indicate nodes of a netlist that have not yet been processed through a current iteration of a propagation algorithm. The update_set can indicate nodes of a netlist that are to be processed by the next iteration of the propagation algorithm. As nodes from the source_set are processed through the propagation algorithm, these nodes are removed from the source_set while other nodes may be moved into the update_set. The phase_expr_conflicts indicates information associated with an error, for example, caused by inconsistently specified phase attributes.

Below is example pseudocode for initializing an RTL circuit design for phase algebra based evaluation. The term sink box refers to a node of a netlist that has an input pin connected to a given net. The initialization algorithm executes until the initialization algorithm has iterated through all nets in a netlist. If a net has received a phase expression, then the initialization algorithm converts the phase expression to a phase ID, assigns the phase ID to the net, and assigns each sink box associated with the net to the source_set. Otherwise, if a net is a primary input to a netlist or a net is associated with the output of a clock generator, then the phase ID corresponding to the null phase tag <> is associated with the net, and the sink boxes attached to the net are stored in the source_set. Since each primary input of a netlist or each output of a clock generator is expected to have been assigned a phase expression, this aspect of the algorithm accounts for the possibility of user omission. Finally, if no phase expression has been assigned to a net, then the unknown phase tag “-” is assigned to the net.

```

1  for each net in circuit model {
2      if ( net has been assigned a phase expression by the designer ) {
3          Convert phase expression to a phase ID.
4          Assign phase ID to the net.
5          Add each sink box of the net to source_set.
6      }
7      else if ( net is a circuit input
8              or net is attached to the output of a clock generator )
9          {
10         Assign phase ID for "<>" to the net.
11         Add each sink box of the net to source_set.
12     }
13     else {
14         Assign phase ID for "-" to the net.
15     }
16 }
```

As discussed earlier, higher level data constructs (e.g., phase tag) are decomposed into lower level data constructs (e.g., NTFs) in order to apply operations of circuit components modeled in the circuit design representation. These operations often yield a sequence of NTFs or a CWSS that is converted back into a phase type in order for propagation to continue or determine an output to associate with a net for later defect analysis. FIG. 9 is a flowchart of example operations for determining an output multi-waveform representation based on an input sequence of non-deterministic transition representations. At block 904, an input sequence of non-deterministic transition representations and a phase type group identifier for the input sequence is received. At block 908, the first entry in an ordered phase type structure is selected that associates phase types with phase type groups. At block 912, it is determined whether the phase type group of the entry matches the received phase type group identifier. If the foregoing is false, then the flow proceeds to block 920. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 916. At block 920, the next entry in the ordered phase type structure is selected, and the flow returns to block 912. At block 916, a sequence of non-deterministic transition representations associated with the phase type of the entry is determined. The flow proceeds to block 924 from block 916. At block 924, it is determined whether the input sequence is a subset of the phase type sequence. If the foregoing is false, then the flow returns to block 920. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 928. At block 928, the phase type indicated in the entry is returned. Embodiments may utilize additional logical constructs for analysis based on various groupings. For instance, an additional logical construct can be employed to group together certain phase type groups. The pseudocode below employs such a construct and refers to it as a meta phase type group.

Below is example pseudocode that determines an output phase type based on a received input CWSS and a received input phase tag group or meta phase tag group. The phase type output pseudocode implements a function referred to as the first_matching_pt function. The first_matching_pt function iterates through a table of phase types in phase type order number. As the first_matching_pt function iterates through the phase type list, the first_matching_pt function calls a function referred to as the pt_to_ptg function. The pt_to_ptg function takes a phase type as an input and returns the phase type group associated with that phase type as an output. For each phase type, the first_matching_pt function checks whether the phase type group returned by the pt_to_ptg function equals the input phase type group or is a member of the input meta phase type group. Additionally, the first_matching_pt function checks whether the input CWSS is a subset of the CWSS associated with the phase type in the phase type table, calling a function referred to as pt_to_cwss (pt). The

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pt_to_cwss function takes a phase type as an input and returns the CWSS associated with that phase type as an output. If both of the foregoing conditions are met, then the phase type is returned as an output. The phase type operators call the first_matching_pt function.

```

1   for each, phase type pt in the phase type table, in order by
number {
2       if ((pt_to_ptg (pt) == mptg or is in the meta-PTG named by
mptg)
3           and (cwss_is_subset (cwss, pt_to_cwss(pt))))
4       {
5           Return pt.
6       }
7   }
8   (should never get here)

```

FIG. 10 is a flowchart of example operations for propagating multi-waveform representations after initialization of an RTL circuit design representation. At block 1004, the circuit design representation is initialized as discussed above. In some cases, the initialization algorithm converts all phase expressions to phase ids via the phase_expr_to_id function. At block 1008, the source set is checked to determine whether it is empty. If the source set is empty, then the propagation process is complete and the flow proceeds to block 1036. At block 1036, checking is applied to the resulting multi-waveform representation propagated throughout the design. The checking algorithms use the generated phase ids to identify particular characteristics associated with a design, some of which can be potential defects. If the source set was not empty at block 1008, the flow proceeds to block 1012.

At block 1012, an input multi-waveform representation is propagated through the next box in the source set and the processed box is removed from the source set. For example, an input phase id is used to search for a result phase id in a lookup table. If a result phase id is found in the lookup table, then the result phase id is returned, and the process proceeds to block 1016. The particular look up tables accessed will vary dependent upon the phase id and the operation (e.g., AND, OR, etc.) represented by the box. More details are provided by FIGS. 11 and 12. FIG. 11 presents example operations for particular logic while FIG. 12 presents example operations for enforcing adjacency restrictions. However, if a result phase id is not found in the lookup table, then the input phase id is converted to a ROLCMP in accordance with the phase id look-up algorithm. Operations then can be performed on the ROLCMPs. Phase expressions can be derived from the ROLCMP operations. The phase expressions can be converted into phase ids. The process proceeds to block 1016.

At block 1016, the multi-waveform representation resulting from block 1012 is compared to the multi-waveform representation currently associated with the output net of the processed box. If the resulting multi-waveform representation is different from the current multi-waveform representation, the flow proceeds to block 1020. Otherwise, the process proceeds to block 1028.

At block 1020, the multi-waveform representation resulting from block 1012 is assigned to the output net associated with the processed box. At block 1024, the sink boxes of the net are placed in the update set.

At block 1028, the source set is checked to determine whether it is empty. If the source set is not empty, then the flow again proceeds to block 1012 at which a multi-waveform representation is propagated through the next box in the source set, and the flow proceeds. Otherwise, the flow pro-

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ceeds to block 1032. At block 1032, the source set is overwritten with the contents of the update set. The flow proceeds to block 1008.

Below is example pseudocode for a propagation algorithm.

```

5   The pseudocode iterates until the source_set is empty. Within
one iteration, the propagation algorithm clears the
update_set. The term "box" referenced in the propagation
algorithm means a node in the netlist, which is connected to
input and output nets. For each box in the source set class and
10  for each net connected to the output of that box, the propaga-
tion pseudocode evaluates the phase id operator correspond-
ing to the circuit component represented by the box, gener-
ating a determined phase id, referred to in the propagation
pseudocode as the new_phase_id. The propagation
15  pseudocode determines whether the determined phase id
assigned to the output net of each box is different from the
phase id previously assigned to the net. If the determined
phase id is different from the phase id previously assigned to
the net, then the pseudocode checks to determine whether the
20  net was given an initial value other than one corresponding to
a null phase type "<>" or unknown phase type "-." If the net
had been given an initial value other than ones associated with
the phase types <> or -, then the propagation pseudocode
stores the calculated value in the phase_expr_conflict set.
25  Otherwise, the propagation pseudocode assigns the deter-
mined phase id to the output net and stores each sink box
associated with the output net to the update_set. At the end of
the iteration, the propagation pseudocode overwrites the
source_set with the boxes stored in the update_set. Conse-
30  quently, the source_set then includes boxes, the input nets of
which were updated with newly calculated phase ids.

```

```

1   while ( source_set is not empty ) {
2       Clear update_set.
3       for each box in source_set {
4           for each net connected to box output {
5               Let new_phase_id = evaluated phase tag on box
output.
6               if ( new_phase_id is different from phase ID
currently assigned to net )
7               {
8                   if ( net has been assigned a phase expression by
the designer ) {
9                       Assign new_phase_id value to net in
10                      phase_expr_conflict map, but leave phase
ID on net unchanged.
11                  }
12                  else {
13                      Assign new_phase_id to net.
14                      Add sink boxes of net to update_set.
15                  }
16              }
17          }
18      }
19      Set source_set = update_set.
20  }

```

FIGS. 11 and 12 are flowcharts of example operations for applying circuit component based operations to sequences of signal transition representations. For instance, a tool applies an operation for an AND component, an operation for an XOR component, etc. Examples of the component based operators include the CWSS operators cwss_and, cwss_xor, cwss_trans_latch, and cwss_trans_latch_const. As the tool analyses each circuit component representation of the circuit design representation, the tool invokes program code corresponding to the circuit component representation. When the program code is invoked, the operations begin at block 1108.

At block 1108, an operation that corresponds to the circuit component representation is applied to a first signal transition

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representation of each sequence of signal transition representations of each input net of the circuit component representation. The result of applying the operation that corresponds to the component is assigned to a first slot of an output sequence. For example, if a circuit component is an AND gate, the NTF operator `ntf_and` can be invoked. The `ntf_and` operator receives a first NTF and a second NTF associated with the first slot of each CWSS that is an input to input nets of the AND gate. The result of applying the foregoing can be assigned to the first slot of an output sequence. For instance, the result of applying the `ntf_and` operator to the first NTF associated with each input CWSS can be applied to the first slot of the output CWSS sequence. The flow proceeds to block 1112.

At block 1112, a process that iterates through each subsequent signal transition representation of each sequence of each input net begins.

At block 1116, the operation is applied to the signal transition representations to yield a result. For instance and continuing with the AND gate example, the process iterates through the second through eighth slot of each input CWSS applied to the AND gate, invoking the `ntf_and` operator. The flow proceeds to block 1120.

At block 1120, the results of the block 1116 are validated against adjacency restrictions. For example, each output NTF can be validated to confirm that such output NTF conforms to the NTF adjacency restrictions. If it does not conform, then the NTF is adjusted.

At block 1124, the validated result is assigned to the next slot of the output sequence. For example, a validated output NTF can be assigned to the appropriate output CWSS slot.

At block 1128, it is determined whether there exist additional subsequent signal transition representations to process. If any additional subsequent signal transition representations remain, then the process returns to block 1112.

Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1201 in FIG. 12. At block 1201, the first element and last element of the output sequence are validated against adjacency restrictions. The flow proceeds to block 1203.

At block 1203, the results of the validation are assigned to a validation variable and an index X is set equal to 0. The index X is used to progress through each element of the output sequence.

At block 1205, it is determined whether the validation variable equals the element of the output sequence that corresponds to the location of the index X. If the validation variable equals the element of the output sequence that corresponds to the location of the index X, then the flow proceeds to block 1219, where the output sequence is indicated. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1207.

At block 1207, the validation variable is assigned to the element of the output sequence that corresponds to the location of the index X. The flow proceeds to block 1209.

At block 1209, the index X is incremented. The flow proceeds to block 1211.

At block 1211, it is determined whether the index X has reached the end of the output sequence by testing whether X equals the number of slots. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1219 at which the output sequence is indicated. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1213.

At block 1213, the validation variable and the slot of the output sequence that corresponds to the location of the index X are validated against the adjacency restrictions. The flow proceeds to block 1215.

At block 1215, the validation result is assigned to the validation variable. The flow returns to block 1205 from block 1215.

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Each CWSS example pseudocode other than the pseudocode corresponding to `cwss_is_subset` generates an output CWSS, and the pseudocode corresponding to `cwss_is_subset` generates a Boolean result, by manipulating each NTF of an input CWSS, exploiting the characteristic that a CWSS is comprised of NTFs. Thus, the CWSS pseudocode invokes the NTF operators, transforming each NTF that comprises a CWSS to generate an output CWSS. The notation “=” means “is equal to,” and the notation “!=” means “is not equal to” in the example pseudocode provided throughout. The CWSS pseudocode referred to as `cwss_basic_operator`, shown below, is a generic algorithm that implements the CWSS operators `cwss_and`, `cwss_xor`, `cwss_trans_latch`, and `cwss_trans_latch_const`. The CWSS pseudocode `cwss_basic_operator` applies the NTF operation that corresponds to the desired CWSS operation, designated as `ntf_op_function` in the pseudocode, on two input CWSS slots, designated `cwss_a[0]` and `cwss_b[0]`. The CWSS slots `cwss_a[0]` and `cwss_b[0]` correspond to NTFs. The `cwss_basic_operator` pseudocode iterates through each slot in the range 1 through 7, applying the `ntf_fix_adjacent` operator to the immediately preceding CWSS slot, designated `cwss_y[i-1]`, and to the result of applying an NTF operator that corresponds to the desired CWSS operator to slots of each CWSS, designated `cwss_a[i]` and `cwss_b[i]`. The `ntf_fix_adjacent` operator ensures that the adjacency restrictions applicable to NTFs are satisfied. The `cwss_basic_operator` pseudocode determines the result of applying the `ntf_fix_adjacent` operator to the first and last CWSS slots of the calculated CWSS, storing the result of the determination in a variable designated `fixed_ntf`. The `cwss_basic_operator` pseudocode resets the iterator by setting it equal to 0. The `cwss_basic_operator` pseudocode sets each slot in the calculated CWSS equal to the variable `fixed_ntf` for as long as any slot in the calculated CWSS does not equal the value of the variable `fixed_ntf`, incrementing the iterator each time. If the iterator equals 8 (meaning that the calculation has been performed for each slot in the CWSS), then the `cwss_basic_operator` pseudocode ends. Otherwise, the `cwss_basic_operator` pseudocode calculates the result of `ntf_fix_adjacent` for each slot in the calculated NTF and for the variable `fixed_ntf`, storing the result of the calculation in the variable `fixed_ntf`.

Generic algorithm for `cwss_and` and `cwss_xor`,
`cwss_trans_latch`, and `cwss_trans_latch_const` (replace
`ntf_op_function` with `ntf_and`, `ntf_xor`, `ntf_trans_latch`,
or `ntf_trans_latch_const`, respectively). The notation
`cwss_x[slot_number]` refers to the NTF stored in
the given slot number of the referenced CWSS.

```

1  Set cwss_y[0] = ntf_op_function(cwss_a[0], cwss_b[0]).
2  for each slot i in the range 1 to 7 {
3      Set cwss_y[i] = ntf_fix_adjacent( cwss_y[i-1],
        ntf_op_function(cwss_a[i], cwss_b[i]) ).
4  }
5  Let fixed_ntf = ntf_fix_adjacent( cwss_y[7], cwss_y[0] ).
6  Set i = 0.
7  while ( fixed_ntf != cwss_y[i] ) {
8      Set cwss_y[i] = fixed_ntf.
9      Increment i by one.
10     if ( i == 8 ) {
11         Exit while-loop. (cwss_y[0] should equal
        ntf_fix_adjacent( cwss_y[7], cwss_y[0] ).)
12     }
13     Set fixed_ntf = ntf_fix_adjacent( fixed_ntf, cwss_y[i] ).
14 }

```

FIG. 13 is a flowchart of example operations for implementing the `cwss_fix_latch` operator. At block 1304, a previ-

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ous variable is set to the last slot of the first input sequence of the signal transition representations.

At block 1308, a control block iterates through each slot of the sequence.

At block 1312, it is determined whether the current slot is neither the middle slot nor the last slot. If the current slot is neither the middle slot nor the last slot, the flow proceeds to block 1316. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1324.

At block 1316, it is determined whether the current slot of the first sequence indicates a representation of a completely non-deterministic signal. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1320. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1324.

At block 1320, it is determined whether the next slot of the first input sequence indicates a representation of a stable signal. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1328. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1324.

At block 1328, it is determined whether the previous variable indicates a representation of a glitch free signal. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1324. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1332.

At block 1324, the current slot of the output sequence is set to indicate the current slot of the first input sequence.

If it was determined that the previous variable does not indicate a glitch free signal, then the current slot of the output sequence is set to indicate a representation of a glitch free signal at block 1332. From either block 1324 or block 1332, the flow proceeds to block 1325.

At block 1325, the previous variable is set to indicate the current slot of the first input sequence and the current slot is updated to the next slot. Control flows from block 1325 to block 1336.

At block 1336, it is determined whether additional slots exist. If additional slots do not exist, then the flow proceeds to block 1340, and the output sequence is indicated. Otherwise, the flow returns to block 1308.

The pseudocode referred to as `cwss_fix_latch` is an example for the CWSS operator `cwss_fix_latch`. The `cwss_fix_latch` pseudocode stores the last NTF in the CWSS, designated `cwss_a[7]`, in a variable designated `ntf_prev`. The pseudocode iterates through each slot in the CWSS. The pseudocode checks whether five conditions are met: 1) the iterator is not equal to three, 2) the iterator is not equal to 7, 3) the NTF at the CWSS slot equals the NTF FX, the NTF at the subsequent CWSS slot equals the NTF FS, and the value of the variable `ntf_prev` does not equal the NTF FG. If the foregoing conditions are met, then the CWSS slot is set equal to the NTF FG. Otherwise, the CWSS slot simply equals the value of the original CWSS slot. The variable `ntf_prev` is then set equal to the CWSS slot.

Algorithm for `cwss_fix_latch`:

```

1  Let ntf_prev = cwss_a[7].
2  for each slot i in the range 0 to 7 {
3      if ( i != 3 and i != 7 and cwss_a[i] == FX and
        cwss_a[i+1] == FS and ntf_prev != FG ) {
4          Set cwss_y[i] = FG.
5      }
6      else {
7          Set cwss_y[i] = cwss_a[i].
8      }
9      Set ntf_prev = cwss_a[i].
10 }
```

FIG. 14 is a flowchart of example operations for implementation of the `cwss_path_delay` operator. At block 1404, a

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delay variable is set to indicate a stable signal representation. The flow proceeds to block 1408.

At block 1408, control block begins to iterate through each slot in a sequence of signal transition representations.

At block 1410, it is determined whether a multi-waveform expression indicates a leading phase clock. If the foregoing is false, then the flow proceeds to block 1412. Otherwise, control flows to block 1416.

At block 1412, a variable J is set to a result of $(I + ((\text{total number of slots})/2))$ modulo the total number of slots. I is the iterator variable, which references a slot of the sequence.

If it was determined at block 1410 that the multi-waveform expression does not indicate a leading phase clock, then the variable J is set to equal the iterator I at block 1416.

At block 1420, it is determined whether I equals zero. If I equals zero, then the flow proceeds to block 1428. At block 1428, the Jth slot of the output sequence is set equal to the Jth slot of the first input sequence. If, at block 1420, it is determined that I does not equal zero, then the flow proceeds to block 1424.

At block 1424, it is determined whether the Jth slot of the input sequence specifies a subset of the waveform transitions specified by the delay variable. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1436. Otherwise, control flows to block 1432.

At block 1432, the delay variable is set to indicate the representation indicated at the Jth slot of the first input sequence. The flow proceeds to block 1436.

At block 1436, the Jth slot of the output sequence is set equal to the delay variable.

At block 1440, it is determined if there are additional slots. If there are additional slots, then the flow returns to block 1408. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1444 to indicate an output sequence.

The CWSS pseudocode referred to as `cwss_path_delay` is an example of the CWSS operator `cwss_path_delay`. The pseudocode sets a variable designated `delay_ntf` equal to the NTF FS. The pseudocode iterates through each slot in the CWSS. If the type argument indicates a leading edge clock, then the iterator, designated i, is stored in a variable designated j. Otherwise, the iterator i is bitwise XORed with the number 4 and stored in the variable j. If the iterator i equals 0, then the ith slot of the result CWSS is replaced with the jth slot of the original CWSS. Otherwise, the pseudocode determines whether the NTF associated with CWSS slot a[j] is a subset of the variable `delay_ntf`, applying the `ntf_is_subset` operator. If the CWSS slot is not a subset, then the slot is stored in the variable `delay_ntf`. The CWSS slot then is overwritten by the value in the variable `delay_ntf`.

Algorithm for `cwss_path_delay`:

```

1  Let delay_ntf = FS.
2  for each slot i in the range 0 to 7 {
3      if ( type is leading ) {
4          Set variable j = i.
5      }
6      else {
7          Set j = i bitwise-exclusive-OR'd with 4.
8      }
9      if ( i == 0 ) {
10         Set cwss_y[j] = cwss_a[j].
11     }
12     else {
13         if ( ntf_is_subset ( cwss_a[j], delay_ntf ) returns false ) {
14             Set delay_ntf = cwss_a[j].
15         }
16         Set cwss_y[j] = delay_ntf.

```

 Algorithm for cwss_path_delay:

```

17   }
18 }
```

FIGS. 15A-15B depict a flowchart of example operations for implementation of the cwss_is_subset operator. At block 1501, it is determined whether the last slots in both input sequences of signal transition representations indicate a glitch free signal. If the foregoing is false, then the flow proceeds to block 1505. Otherwise, control flows to block 1503.

At block 1505, the glitch free range variable is set to a value designated OUT, which indicates that the iterator is outside a range of slots in which the first input sequence of signal transition representations and the second sequence of signal transition representations both indicate a glitch free range variable in corresponding slots.

At block 1501, if it is determined that the last slots in both input sequences of signal transition representations indicate a glitch free signal, then the flow proceeds to block 1503.

At block 1503, the glitch free range variable is set to a value designated MATCH, which indicates that first sequence of signal transition representations and the second sequence of signal transition representations both indicate a glitch free signal in corresponding slots. The flow proceeds to block 1507.

Block 1507 is control block that begins a loop of operations that iterates through each slot of the first and the second sequences of signal transition representations.

At block 1509, it is determined whether the waveforms represented by signal transition representations of the current slot of the first input sequence are a subset of the waveforms represented by signal transition representations of the current slot of a second input sequence. If the result of the foregoing is false, then the flow proceeds to block 1513 at which a value of false is returned. Conversely, if block 1509 evaluates to true, then the flow proceeds to block 1515.

At block 1515, it is determined whether the glitch free range variable is set to a value of OUT. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1517. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1536.

At block 1517, it is determined whether the current slot in both input sequences indicates a glitch free signal. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1519 at which the glitch free range variable is set to a value of MATCH, and the flow proceeds to block 1521, where it is determined whether additional slots remain to be processed. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1521.

At block 1536, it is determined whether the current slot in the second input sequence does not indicate a glitch free signal. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1538. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1540.

At block 1538, the glitch free range variable is set to a value of OUT, and the flow proceeds to block 1521. At block 1521, it is determined whether additional slots remain. If there are additional slots, then the process returns to block 1507. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1523, at which a value of true is returned.

At block 1540, it is determined whether the current slot in the first input sequence does not indicate a glitch free signal. If the foregoing is true, then the flow proceeds to block 1544. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1542. At block 1544, the glitch free range variable is set to a value of SUB. The value SUB designates that, within a range of slots in which the first input sequence of signal transition representations and

the second input sequence of signal transition representations both initially contained a glitch free signal, there exists a subrange in which only the second input sequence of signal transition representations contains a glitch free signal. If the statement at block 1540 evaluates to false, then the flow proceeds to block 1542.

At block 1542, it is determined whether the glitch free range variable indicates a value of SUB. If the foregoing is true, then a value of false is returned at block 1546. Otherwise, the flow proceeds to block 1521.

The pseudocode referred to as cwss_is_subset implements the CWSS operator cwss_is_subset, the operator determining whether a first CWSS is a subset of a second CWSS. The pseudocode introduces the variable fg_range_state, which can assume one of three values, denoted MATCH, OUT, or SUB. The value MATCH indicates that the first CWSS and second CWSS both contain FG in corresponding slots. The value OUT indicates that the iterator is outside a range of slots in which the first CWSS and second CWSS both contain FG in corresponding slots. The value SUB indicates that, within a range of slots which started with the first CWSS and second CWSS both containing FG, there is a subrange in which only the second CWSS contains FG. A range of slots containing FG is used to specify sets of waveforms which contain no glitches during the range of times associated with the slots associated with the CWSS. For a first CWSS to be a subset of a second CWSS, the first CWSS must not contain multiple disjoint ranges of FG in slots for which the second CWSS contains a single range of FG, because this would allow waveforms represented by the first CWSS to have multiple transitions during the corresponding time range, such waveforms being excluded from the set of waveforms represented by the second CWSS which allows at most one transition during the corresponding time range. The pseudocode determines whether the last slot in a first CWSS and a second CWSS equals the NTF FG. If the foregoing condition is met, then the pseudocode stores the value MATCH in the variable fg_range_state. Otherwise, the pseudocode stores the value OUT in the variable fg_range_state. The pseudocode iterates through each slot in each CWSS, determining whether each NTF of the first CWSS is a subset of the corresponding NTF of the second CWSS, by applying the ntf_is_subset operator. If any NTF in the first CWSS is not a subset of the corresponding NTF of the second CWSS, then the pseudocode returns false. Otherwise, the pseudocode determines whether the variable fg_range_state equals the value OUT. If the variable fg_range_state equals the value OUT, then the pseudocode checks whether each NTF of the first CWSS and the second CWSS equal the NTF FG. If the foregoing is true, then the value of fg_range_state is set equal to MATCH. If the variable fg_range_state is not equal to OUT, the pseudocode checks if the value of any NTF in the second CWSS does not equal FG, in which case fg_range_state is set equal to OUT. Otherwise, the pseudocode determines whether the NTF in the first CWSS does not equal FG. If the foregoing is true, then fg_range_state is set equal to SUB. Otherwise, if the variable fg_range_state equals SUB, then the pseudocode returns false.

 Algorithm for cwss_is_subset. The variable
 fg_range_state has a value of MATCH, OUT, or SUB.
 This is used to detect multiple FG ranges in cwss_a
 overlapping one FG range in cwss_b.

```

1  if ( cwss_a[7] == cwss_b[7] == FG ) {
2    Set fg_range_state = MATCH.
```

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-continued

Algorithm for cwss_is_subset. The variable fg_range_state has a value of MATCH, OUT, or SUB. This is used to detect multiple FG ranges in cwss_a overlapping one FG range in cwss_b.

```

3      }
4      else {
5          Set fg_range_state = OUT.
6      }
7      for i = 0 to 7 {
8          if ( ntf_is_subset (cwss_a[i], cwss_b[i]) returns false ) {
9              Return false.
10         }
11         else if ( fg_range_state == OUT ) {
12             if ( cwss_a[i] == cwss_b[i] == FG ) {
13                 Set fg_range_state = MATCH.
14             }
15         }
16         else if ( cwss_b[i] != FG ) {
17             Set fg_range_state = OUT.
18         }
19         else if ( cwss_a[i] != FG ) {
20             Set fg_range_state = SUB.
21         }
22         else if ( fg_range_state == SUB ) {
23             Return false. (We detected multiple FG ranges in
                cwss_a during one FG range in cwss_b.)
24         }
25     }
26     Return true

```

FIGS. 16-24 are conceptual depiction of circuit design evaluation with example phase tags. FIG. 16 shows the topology of an example design. The design includes two clock signals **1602**, **1606**, which are primary inputs to the design. The clock signals **1602**, **1606** can be generated by external clocks referred to as CLKA and CLKB, respectively. The design includes three flip-flops **1622**, **1626**, and **1642**. Each flip-flop **1622**, **1626**, and **1642** is comprised of two transparent latches and an inverter **1646** as depicted in the inset. The design includes two path delay blocks **1630**, **1634** to model signal propagation delays. The design also includes an AND gate **1638**. The design can be provided to a general purpose computer as an input. For example, in one embodiment, a schematic like the one shown in FIG. 16 can be provided as an input to a graphical user interface of a computer program that embodies the disclosure. The general purpose computer can be configured to convert the schematic into a netlist. The nodes of the netlist correspond to the circuit components **1602-1642**. The nets of the netlist correspond to the signals **1610-1666**. In one embodiment, a user can provide the phase tags at **1610**, **1618**, and **1674** as primary inputs to a general purpose computer executing a software embodiment of the disclosure.

FIG. 17 depicts the design after application of the initialization algorithm. A computer program implementing the initialization algorithm can assign the phase tag “-” to nets **1704**, **1708**, **1712**, **1716**, **1720**, **1724**. A computer program implementing the initialization algorithm can also instantiate the source set **1728** and the update set **1732**. The computer program can populate the source set with the boxes **1736**, **1740**, and **1744**, corresponding to flip-flops **1736**, **1740**, **1744**. The boxes in the source set are the sink boxes of nets for which phase tags were provided, in accordance with the initialization algorithm. The computer program can populate the update set **1732** with the null set.

FIG. 18 depicts the design after executing one iteration of the propagation algorithm. In FIG. 16, phase tags were furnished for the primary inputs of a circuit design to a general purpose computer. Phase tags are a subset of phase expres-

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sions. Thus, the propagation process begins application of phase tag operators. Since the circuit component associated with box **1836** is a flip-flop, in one embodiment, the flip-flop phase tag operator is invoked. The flip-flop phase tag operator takes two phase tag inputs, “A@L” and “A.” The phase tag operator associated with a flip-flop invokes the phase type operator associated with a flip-flop. The phase type operator associated with a flip-flop, pt_flipflop, invokes the phase type operator associated with a latch, pt_latch. The phase type operator associated with a latch invokes the phase type group operator and the CWSS operator, each associated with a latch. The phase type operator invokes the first matching phase type algorithm, passing the first matching phase type algorithm the results of the phase type group operator and the CWSS operator. The CWSS operator associated with a latch invokes the NTF operators associated with the CWSS. The result of the foregoing operations is a phase tag “A@LPGF” at the output net **1804** associated with the flip-flop. The propagation algorithm then puts the sink box of the output net, PDB1, in the update set, removing flip-flop **1836** from the source set **1828**.

FIG. 19 illustrates the second iteration of the propagation algorithm. As shown in FIG. 19 and in one implementation, a general purpose computer implementing the propagation algorithm applies the propagation algorithm to flip-flop **1940**. Thus, the same operations are executed as described in FIG. 18. The computer program implementing the algorithms described in the disclosure causes the general purpose computer to remove flip-flop **1940** from the source set and to place PDB2 **1948** in the update set **1932**, since PDB2 **1948** is the sink box associated with the output net **1908**. Accordingly, the source set **1928** includes one element, flip-flop **1944**, as shown in FIG. 19.

FIG. 20 illustrates the third iteration of the propagation algorithm. The propagation algorithm updates the value at the output net of flip-flop **2044**, the last item in the source set. The result of the foregoing is the phase type shown at the output net **2024**. As shown at **2060**, flip-flop **2044** is removed from the source set, since an output phase type as shown at output net **2024** has been calculated for the output net **2024** associated with flip-flop **2044**. The source set **2028** is checked to determine whether the source set **2028** is empty. Since the source set **2028** is empty, the update set **2032** is moved to the source set as shown at **2064**, and the update set **2056** is cleared. It is determined whether the source set is now empty.

FIG. 21 illustrates the fourth iteration of the propagation algorithm. The propagation algorithm updates the value at the PDB1 **2104** output net **2108**. As described above in previous figures, the propagation algorithm generates the value at the output net **2108** with the operators associated with the PDB circuit component. Initially, the source set **2120** and update set **2124** are as depicted at **2116**. However, after generating the output phase type, the propagation algorithm removes PDB1 **2104** from the source set **2132** and includes the AND gate **2112** in the update set **2136**, since the AND gate **2112** is the sink box of the output net **2108**. Since the source set is not empty, the propagation algorithm continues to a fifth iteration.

FIG. 22 illustrates the fifth iteration of the propagation algorithm. The propagation algorithm follows similar operations as those described in FIG. 21, generating an output phase tag at the output net **2208** of PDB2 **2204**. Prior to the fifth iteration, the source set **2216** and update set **2220** included the contents depicted at **2212**. After completion of the fifth iteration, PDB2 is removed from the source set **2216** as indicated at **2224**. At block **2228**, the source set is empty. Accordingly, the update set is moved to the source set, result-

ing in the contents depicted at **2236**, the source set **2240** containing the AND gate **2248**, and the update set **2244** containing the null set.

FIG. **23** illustrates the sixth iteration of the propagation algorithm. The propagation algorithm is applied to the AND gate circuit component **2304**. Hence, the operators that are invoked are associated with the AND gate circuit component **2304**. Through application of the propagation algorithm, an output phase tag is determined at the output net **2306** of the AND gate **2304**. Prior to commencing the sixth iteration, the source set **2312** and update set **2316** are as shown at **2308**. After conclusion of the sixth iteration, the source set **2324** and update set **2328** are as shown at **2320**. The update set is then overwritten to the source set and depicted at **2332**.

FIG. **24** illustrates the seventh iteration of the propagation algorithm. The propagation algorithm is applied to the flip-flop **2408**, and flip-flop **2408** is removed from the source set. The phase expression resulting is identical to the phase expression currently assigned to the output net **2410** of flip-flop **2408**. There is no change to the update set relative to the previous iteration; therefore, the update set remains empty. The update set is moved to the source set, as depicted at **2424**. Since the source set is empty, the propagation algorithm has completed its tasks, and the flow proceeds to checking algorithms.

As will be appreciated by one skilled in the art, aspects of the present disclosure may be embodied as a system, method or computer program product. Accordingly, aspects of the present inventive subject matter may take the form of an entirely hardware embodiment, a software embodiment (including firmware, resident software, micro-code, etc.) or an embodiment combining software and hardware aspects that may all generally be referred to herein as a "circuit," "module" or "system." Furthermore, aspects of the present inventive subject matter may take the form of a computer program product embodied in one or more computer readable medium(s) having computer readable program code embodied thereon.

The present invention may be a system, a method, and/or a computer program product. The computer program product may include a computer readable storage medium (or media) having computer readable program instructions thereon for causing a processor to carry out aspects of the present invention.

The computer readable storage medium can be a tangible device that can retain and store instructions for use by an instruction execution device. The computer readable storage medium may be, for example, but is not limited to, an electronic storage device, a magnetic storage device, an optical storage device, an electromagnetic storage device, a semiconductor storage device, or any suitable combination of the foregoing. A non-exhaustive list of more specific examples of the computer readable storage medium includes the following: a portable computer diskette, a hard disk, a random access memory (RAM), a read-only memory (ROM), an erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM or Flash memory), a static random access memory (SRAM), a portable compact disc read-only memory (CD-ROM), a digital versatile disk (DVD), a memory stick, a floppy disk, a mechanically encoded device such as punch-cards or raised structures in a groove having instructions recorded thereon, and any suitable combination of the foregoing. A computer readable storage medium, as used herein, is not to be construed as being transitory signals per se, such as radio waves or other freely propagating electromagnetic waves, electromagnetic waves propagating through a waveguide or other

transmission media (e.g., light pulses passing through a fiber-optic cable), or electrical signals transmitted through a wire.

Computer readable program instructions described herein can be downloaded to respective computing/processing devices from a computer readable storage medium or to an external computer or external storage device via a network, for example, the Internet, a local area network, a wide area network and/or a wireless network. The network may comprise copper transmission cables, optical transmission fibers, wireless transmission, routers, firewalls, switches, gateway computers and/or edge servers. A network adapter card or network interface in each computing/processing device receives computer readable program instructions from the network and forwards the computer readable program instructions for storage in a computer readable storage medium within the respective computing/processing device.

Computer readable program instructions for carrying out operations of the present invention may be assembler instructions, instruction-set-architecture (ISA) instructions, machine instructions, machine dependent instructions, microcode, firmware instructions, state-setting data, or either source code or object code written in any combination of one or more programming languages, including an object oriented programming language such as Java, Smalltalk, C++ or the like, and conventional procedural programming languages, such as the "C" programming language or similar programming languages. The computer readable program instructions may execute entirely on the user's computer, partly on the user's computer, as a stand-alone software package, partly on the user's computer and partly on a remote computer or entirely on the remote computer or server. In the latter scenario, the remote computer may be connected to the user's computer through any type of network, including a local area network (LAN) or a wide area network (WAN), or the connection may be made to an external computer (for example, through the Internet using an Internet Service Provider). In some embodiments, electronic circuitry including, for example, programmable logic circuitry, field-programmable gate arrays (FPGA), or programmable logic arrays (PLA) may execute the computer readable program instructions by utilizing state information of the computer readable program instructions to personalize the electronic circuitry, in order to perform aspects of the present invention.

Aspects of the present invention are described herein with reference to flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams of methods, apparatus (systems), and computer program products according to embodiments of the invention. It will be understood that each block of the flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams, and combinations of blocks in the flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams, can be implemented by computer readable program instructions.

These computer readable program instructions may be provided to a processor of a general purpose computer, special purpose computer, or other programmable data processing apparatus to produce a machine, such that the instructions, which execute via the processor of the computer or other programmable data processing apparatus, create means for implementing the functions/acts specified in the flowchart and/or block diagram block or blocks. These computer readable program instructions may also be stored in a computer readable storage medium that can direct a computer, a programmable data processing apparatus, and/or other devices to function in a particular manner, such that the computer readable storage medium having instructions stored therein comprises an article of manufacture including instructions which implement aspects of the function/act specified in the flowchart and/or block diagram block or blocks.

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The computer readable program instructions may also be loaded onto a computer, other programmable data processing apparatus, or other device to cause a series of operations to be performed on the computer, other programmable apparatus or other device to produce a computer implemented process, such that the instructions which execute on the computer, other programmable apparatus, or other device implement the functions/acts specified in the flowchart and/or block diagram block or blocks.

The flowchart and block diagrams in the Figures illustrate the architecture, functionality, and operation of possible implementations of systems, methods, and computer program products according to various embodiments of the present invention. In this regard, each block in the flowchart or block diagrams may represent a module, segment, or portion of instructions, which comprises one or more executable instructions for implementing the specified logical function(s). In some alternative implementations, the functions noted in the block may occur out of the order noted in the figures. For example, two blocks shown in succession may, in fact, be executed substantially concurrently, or the blocks may sometimes be executed in the reverse order, depending upon the functionality involved. It will also be noted that each block of the block diagrams and/or flowchart illustration, and combinations of blocks in the block diagrams and/or flowchart illustration, can be implemented by special purpose hardware-based systems that perform the specified functions or acts or carry out combinations of special purpose hardware and computer instructions.

FIG. 25 depicts an example computer system compact multi-wave based circuit design evaluator. A computer system includes a processor unit 2504 (possibly including multiple processors, multiple cores, multiple nodes, and/or implementing multi-threading, etc.). The computer system includes a memory unit 2508. The memory unit 2508 may be system memory (e.g., one or more of cache, SRAM, DRAM, zero capacitor RAM, Twin Transistor RAM, eDRAM, EDO RAM, DDR RAM, EEPROM, NRAM, RRAM, SONOS, PRAM, etc.) or any one or more of the above already described possible realizations of machine-readable media. The computer system also includes a bus 2512 (e.g., PCI bus, ISA bus, PCI-Express bus, HyperTransport® bus, InfiniBand® bus, NuBus, etc.). The computer system also includes a compact multi-wave based circuit design evaluator ("evaluator") 2521. The evaluator propagates compact representations of multiple waveforms throughout nets of a register level circuit design representation as previously described. The memory unit 2508 may include one or more functionalities that facilitate storing the look-up tables or other data structures for evaluating a circuit design representation based on representations of multiple waveforms and decomposition of compact multi-waveform representations into sequence of non-deterministic signal transition representations. Any one of these functionalities may be partially (or entirely) implemented in hardware and/or on the processor unit 2504. For example, the functionality may be implemented with an application specific integrated circuit, in logic implemented in the processor unit 2504, in a co-processor on a peripheral device or card, etc. The processor unit 2504 and the memory unit 2508 are coupled to the bus 2512. Although illustrated as being coupled to the bus 2512, the memory unit 2508 may be coupled to the processor unit 2504.

While the embodiments are described with reference to various implementations and exploitations, it will be understood that these embodiments are illustrative and that the scope of the inventive subject matter is not limited to them. In general, techniques for evaluating a register level circuit

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design representation with compact multi-waveform representations as described herein may be implemented with facilities consistent with any hardware system or hardware systems. Many variations, modifications, additions, and improvements are possible.

Plural instances may be provided for components, operations or structures described herein as a single instance. Finally, boundaries between various components, operations and data stores are somewhat arbitrary, and particular operations are illustrated in the context of specific illustrative configurations. Other allocations of functionality are envisioned and may fall within the scope of the inventive subject matter. In general, structures and functionality presented as separate components in the example configurations may be implemented as a combined structure or component. Similarly, structures and functionality presented as a single component may be implemented as separate components. These and other variations, modifications, additions, and improvements may fall within the scope of the inventive subject matter.

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

determining a sequence of signal transition representations associated with an input net of an indicated component in a register transfer level circuit design, wherein each signal transition representation of the sequence of signal transition representations represents a non-deterministic transition from a previous signal state to a set of one or more possible signal states;

determining, based on the indicated component, an output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net;

determining whether the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to restrictions that restrict which signal transition representations can be adjacent to other signal transition representations;

associating the output sequence of signal transition representations with an output net of the indicated component if the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to the restrictions; and

modifying the output sequence of signal transition representations to conform to the restrictions if the output sequence of signal transition representations does not conform to the restrictions and associating the modified output sequence of signal transition representations with the output net.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said determining the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net of the indicated component comprises determining that the sequence of signal transition representations is specified for a representation of any number of waveforms that is assigned to the input net.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising determining a group identifier specified for the representation of any number of waveforms, wherein the group identifier disambiguates the sequence of signal transition representations that is specified for more than one representation of any number of waveforms.

4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:

if the indicated component has a single input net that is the input net,

determining, based on the indicated component, a first output group identifier derived from the group identifier specified for the representation of any number of waveforms associated with the input net;

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if the indicated component has a plurality of input nets, determining, based on the indicated component, the first output group identifier derived from group identifiers specified for the representations of any numbers of waveforms associated with the plurality of input nets, wherein the plurality of input nets includes the input net.

5. The method of claim 4 further comprising traversing an ordered structure of representations of any numbers of waveforms until an entry is found that indicates a sequence of signal transition representations that represents a superset of waveforms relative to a set of waveforms represented by the output sequence of signal transition representations or the modified sequence of signal transition representations and that indicates a group identifier that matches the first output group identifier.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said determining, based on the indicated component, the output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net comprises applying an operation that represents behavior of the indicated component.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising initializing nets of the register transfer level circuit design representation to identify those of the nets associated with either a primary input or a clock signal generator and to identify those nets that are not associated with a representation of any number of waveforms.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said determining the output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net comprises determining the output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net and from another sequence of signal transition representations associated with a second input net.

9. A computer program product for evaluating a circuit design, the computer program product comprising:

a computer readable storage medium having program instructions stored thereon, the program instructions comprising program instructions to,

determine a sequence of signal transition representations associated with an input net of an indicated component in a register transfer level circuit design, wherein each signal transition representation of the sequence of signal transition representations represents a non-deterministic transition from a previous signal state to a set of one or more possible signal states;

determine, based on the indicated component, an output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net;

determine whether the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to restrictions that restrict which signal transition representations can be adjacent to other signal transition representations;

associate the output sequence of signal transition representations with an output net of the indicated component if the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to the restrictions; and

modify the output sequence of signal transition representations to conform to the restrictions if the output sequence of signal transition representations does not conform to the restrictions and associate the modified output sequence of signal transition representations with the output net.

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10. The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the program instructions to determine the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net of the indicated component comprises program instructions to determine that the sequence of signal transition representations is specified for a representation of any number of waveforms that is assigned to the input net.

11. The computer program product of claim 10 further comprising program instructions to determine a group identifier specified for the representation of any number of waveforms, wherein the group identifier disambiguates the sequence of signal transition representations that is specified for more than one representation of any number of waveforms.

12. The computer program product of claim 11 further comprising program instructions to:

if the indicated component has a single input net that is the input net,

determine, based on the indicated component, a first output group identifier derived from the group identifier specified for the representation of any number of waveforms associated with the input net;

if the indicated component has a plurality of input nets, determine, based on the indicated component, the first output group identifier derived from group identifiers specified for the representations of any numbers of waveforms associated with the plurality of input nets, wherein the plurality of input nets includes the input net.

13. The computer program product of claim 12 further comprising program instructions to traverse an ordered structure of representations of any numbers of waveforms until an entry is found that indicates a sequence of signal transition representations that represents a superset of waveforms relative to a set of waveforms represented by the output sequence of signal transition representations or the modified sequence of signal transition representations and that indicates a group identifier that matches the first output group identifier.

14. The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the program instructions to determine, based on the indicated component, the output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net comprises program instructions to apply an operation that represents behavior of the indicated component.

15. The computer program product of claim 9 further comprising program instructions to initialize nets of the register transfer level circuit design representation to identify those of the nets associated with either a primary input or a clock signal generator and to identify those nets that are not associated with a representation of any number of waveforms.

16. The computer program product of claim 9 wherein the program instructions to determine the output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net comprises program instructions to determine the output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net and from another sequence of signal transition representations associated with a second input net.

17. An apparatus comprising:

a processor; and

a computer readable storage medium having stored thereon program instructions executable by the processor to cause the apparatus to,

determine a sequence of signal transition representations associated with an input net of an indicated component

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in a register transfer level circuit design, wherein each signal transition representation of the sequence of signal transition representations represents a non-deterministic transition from a previous signal state to a set of one or more possible signal states;

determine, based on the indicated component, an output sequence of signal transition representations derived from the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net;

determine whether the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to restrictions that restrict which signal transition representations can be adjacent to other signal transition representations;

associate the output sequence of signal transition representations with an output net of the indicated component if the output sequence of signal transition representations conforms to the restrictions; and

modify the output sequence of signal transition representations to conform to the restrictions if the output sequence of signal transition representations does not conform to the restrictions and associate the modified output sequence of signal transition representations with the output net.

18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the program instructions executable by the processor to cause the apparatus to determine the sequence of signal transition representations associated with the input net of the indicated component comprises program instructions program instructions execut-

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able by the processor to cause the apparatus to determine that the sequence of signal transition representations is specified for a representation of any number of waveforms that is assigned to the input net.

19. The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising program instructions executable by the processor to cause the apparatus to determine a group identifier specified for the representation of any number of waveforms, wherein the group identifier disambiguates the sequence of signal transition representations that is specified for more than one representation of any number of waveforms.

20. The apparatus of claim 19 further comprising program instructions executable by the processor to:

if the indicated component has a single input net that is the input net,

determine, based on the indicated component, a first output group identifier derived from the group identifier specified for the representation of any number of waveforms associated with the input net;

if the indicated component has a plurality of input nets, determine, based on the indicated component, a first output group identifier derived from group identifiers specified for the representations of any numbers of waveforms associated with the plurality of input nets, wherein the plurality of input nets includes the input net.

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